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Correspondence of John Adams with  
Benjamin Waterhouse

1784-1822

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Adams

Statesman and friend

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STATESMAN AND FRIEND





# STATESMAN AND FRIEND

CORRESPONDENCE OF JOHN ADAMS  
WITH BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE

1784-1822

EDITED BY  
WORTHINGTON CHAUNCEY FORD



BOSTON  
LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY  
1927



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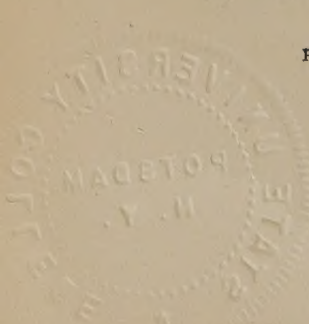
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## NOTE

Two series of private letters of John Adams have been printed in the past without proper consideration of what was due to the writer. His letters to a kinsman — Cunningham — were published in full, after an unsuccessful attempt to levy blackmail, and at a time when party spirit ran high. His intimate letters to Benjamin Rush were printed but not published and are not so well known. In both cases careful editing was demanded and not applied. A man of strong feeling, writing under a sense of great injury, and naturally of intemperate expression, his utterances are vivid, but at times extreme, and have given him a reputation which he did not deserve, because allowance must be made for the occasion. His correspondence in later life with Jefferson is proof of his finer qualities, and somewhere near to that correspondence may be placed these letters to Dr. Waterhouse. A physician of advanced views in medicine and in politics, and smarting under what he believed to be persecution, called out the sympathy of one who had also endured a weight of social and party odium that

seemed unjust. These letters from John Adams were recently found among the belongings of Colonel Henry Lee; to them have been added a few from Dr. Waterhouse. It is believed, however, that most of the Doctor's letters to Adams were lost or destroyed, thus making impossible an attempt to show how far they were responsible for the strongly flavored replies. Our thanks are due to Mr. Henry Lee Shattuck, who has given the originals to the Massachusetts Historical Society, and to Mr. Charles Francis Adams, who courteously replied to the question about the existence of the Waterhouse letters.

W. C. F.

*Boston, May 1927.*

STATESMAN AND FRIEND





AUTEUIL NEAR PARIS, *Sept'r* 8, 1784.

DEAR SIR, — I received your friendly Letter of the 19. June, by my dear Mrs. Adams, with great Pleasure and shall ever be obliged to you for a Line when you have Leisure. I am very glad our University has so able a Professor of Physick, and I doubt not you will soon silence all opposition.<sup>1</sup> I should be obliged to you for your two Orations.

All Paris, and indeed all Europe, is at present amused with a kind of physical new Light or Witcraft, called Animal Magnetism. A German Empirick by the Name of Mesmer,<sup>2</sup> has turned the Heads of a multitude of People. He pretends that his Art is an Universal Cure, and wholly superseeds the Practice of Physick and consequently

<sup>1</sup> In 1783 the Hersey Professorship of the Theory and Practice of Physic was established in Harvard University and Dr. Waterhouse was appointed, holding the office until 1812. His inaugural oration, in Latin, does not seem to have been printed until 1829.

<sup>2</sup> Friedrich (or Franz) Anton Mesmer (1733–1815) was an Austrian doctor who had removed to Paris in 1778 and practised his “mystic” art. The medical faculty of Paris denounced him as a charlatan and the French Government appointed a commission, of which Franklin was a member, to report upon his methods. The conclusion denied the existence of “animal magnetism” and discredited Mesmer.

your Professorship, so that you will not, I hope, become his Disciple.

The Thing is so serious that the King has thought it necessary to appoint a Number of Physicians and Academicians, with your Friend *Franklin* at *their Head*, to enquire into it. They are all able Men, and have published a masterly Report, which shews very clearly that this Magnetism can never be usefull, for the best of all possible Reasons, viz. *because it does not exist*. One would think the Report sufficient to annihilate the Enthusiasm, but it has not yet fully succeeded; on the Contrary, it has stirred up a Nest of Hornets against the Authors of it, and Mesmer has the Boldness to apply to Parliament by a Public Process, to have his Art examined anew. What may be the Consequence I don't know: But I think the Phrenzy must evaporate.

The Professors of the Art have acquired sometimes a surprising ascendancy over the Imaginations of their Patients, so as to throw them into violent Convulsions, only by a few odd Gestures. All this the Commissioners ascribe to Imagination; and I suppose justly; but if this Faculty of the Mind can produce such terrible Effects upon the Body, I think you Physicians ought to study and

teach us some Method of managing and controuling it.

I am, Sir with great Esteem, your Friend and humble Servant.

AUTEUIL, NEAR PARIS, *April* 23, 1785.

DEAR SIR, — This Letter will be delivered you, by your old Acquaintance, John Quincy Adams, whom I beg leave to recommend to your Attention and Favour. He is anxious to study sometime, at your University before he begins the Study of the Law which appears at present to be the Profession of his Choice.

He must undergo an Examination, in which I suspect he will not appear exactly what he is; in Truth there are few who take their Degrees at College, who have so much Knowledge; but his Studies having been pursued by himself, on his travels without any steady Tutor, he will be found awkward in speaking Latin, in Prosody, in Parsing, and even, perhaps, in that accuracy of Pronunciation in reading orations or Poems in that Language, which is often chiefly attended to in such Examinations.

It seems to be necessary therefore that I make this Apology for him to you, and request you to

communicate it in confidence to the Gentlemen who are to examine him, and such others as you think prudent. If you were to examine him in English and French Poetry, I know not where you would find any body his Superiour. in Roman and English History few Persons of his Age;<sup>1</sup> it is rare to find a youth possessed of so much Knowledge. He has translated Virgil's Aeneid, Suetonius, the whole of Sallust, and Tacitus's Agricola, his Germany and several Books of his Annals, a great part of Horace, some of Ovid and some of Caesar's Commentaries in Writing, besides a number of Tully's orations. These he may shew you, and altho you will find the Translations in many Places inaccurate in point of Style, as must be expected at his Age, you will see abundant Proof, that it is impossible to make those translations without Understanding his Authors and their Language very well.

In Greek his Progress has not been equal. Yet he has studied Morcells in Aristotle's Poeticks, in Plutarch's Lives, and Lucian's Dialogues, the Choice of Hercules in Xenophon, and lately he has gone through several Books in Homer's Iliad.

In Mathematicks I hope he will pass muster.

<sup>1</sup> He was in his eighteenth year.



In the Course of the last Year, instead of playing Cards like the fashionable world, I have spent my Evenings with him. We went with some Accuracy through the Geometry in the Praeceptor, the Eight Books of Simpson's Euclid, in Latin and compared it Problem by Problem and Theorem by Theorem with Le Père Dechâllès in french, We went through plain Trigonometry and plain Sailing, Fenning's Algebra, and the Decimal Fractions, arithmetical and Geometrical Proportions, and the Conic Sections in Ward's Mathematicks. I then attempted a sublime Flight and endeavoured to give him some Idea of the Differential Method of Calculation of the Marquis de L'Hospital, and the Method of Fluxions and infinite Series of Sir Isaac Newton. But alas it is thirty years since I thought of Mathematicks, and I found I had lost the little I once knew, especially of these higher Branches of Geometry, so that he is as yet but a Smatterer like his Father. However, he has a foundation laid which will enable him with a Year's Attendance on the Mathematical Professor, to make the necessary Proficiency for a Degree. He is studious enough and emulous enough, and when he comes to mix with his new Friends and young Companions he will make his way well enough. I hope he will

be on his Guard against those Airs of Superiority among the Scholars, which his larger Acquaintance with the world, and his manifest Superiority in the Knowledge of some Things, may but too naturally inspire into a young Mind, and I beg of you, Sir, to be his friendly Monitor, in this Respect and in all others.

With great Esteem I have the Honour to be,  
Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant.

PHILADELPHIA, *Feb.* 24, 1791.

DEAR SIR — It was not, till yesterday that I received your kind Letter, with your Discourse on Animation;<sup>1</sup> for both of which obliging favours I pray you to accept of my best Thanks.

My incessant Drudgery for three and thirty Years in the dull fields and forests of Law and Politicks, has rendered it impossible for me to spare much of my time, in disquisitions of natural knowledge. Whenever any Thing of the kind however has accidentally fallen in my Way, it has revived the fond Attachment of my Youth, and given me more pleasure than I can account for.

There is no Physical Subject has occurred

<sup>1</sup> *The Principle of Vitality*, a discourse before the Humane Society of Massachusetts, June 1790.

oftener to my Thoughts, or excited more of my Curiosity, than that which you chose for your Discourse, *Animal Life*. It has long appeared to me astonishing, that it should be impossible to discover, what it is, which the Air conveys into our Lungs and leaves behind it, in the Body when we breathe. This, whatever it is, seems to be, the Cause of Life, or at least of the Continuance and Support of it, in the larger Animals, whether the Air, in any similar manner, supports the Animalcules which we discover by Microscopes, in almost every kind of substance I know not.

Dr. Franklin has sometimes described to me in Conversation, experiments which he made in various parts of his Life relative to this subject, which I hope will be found among his Papers. I should be afraid, upon mere memory of transient Conversation to repeat some facts which he related to me, of the revival of animalcules to perfect Life and Activity after ten Years of Torpor, in a Phyal which he left in Philadelphia when he went to England and which had not been handled till his return.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Franklin told of flies drowned in Madeira wine which endured a voyage across the Atlantic and were revived by exposure to the sun. *Writings* (Smyth ed.), vol. vi, p. 43.

Pray where is the Evidence of the Existence of a subtle Electric fluid which pervades the Universe? and if that fact were proved, where is your Authority for saying that such an Electrick fluid is the Cause of Life? Why may it not as well be Magnetism? or Steam, or Nitre? or fixed Air? These are all tremendous Forces in nature. But where and what is the Principle or Cause of Activity in all of them?

The Cause of Motion in all these Phaenomena, as well as in the Emanations of Light, or the Revolutions of the Heavens or Gravitation on Earth, is still to seek.

Your Discourse, my dear Sir, has given me great Pleasure, and, (if my opinion is worth your having, tho indeed I must acknowledge it is of very little value in such Things) does honour to you, and to the Societies to which you belong.

With great Esteem, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient and most humble Servant.

QUINCY, *September 10, 1800.*

DEAR SIR, — I have received and will communicate to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, your Prospect of exterminating the Small Pox.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Prospect of exterminating the Small-Pox; History of the Variolae vaccinae or Kine-Pox*, published in 1800.

I have read this History of the Kine Pox with pleasure. Your Zeal and Industry to give these Experiments fair play in America deserve the thanks of all the Friends of Science and Humanity.

To disarm the Small Pox of its contagion is an enterprise worthy of a Hercules in medicine. With great regard, I am, Dear Sir, your obliged Friend and humble Servant.

QUINCY, *Feb.* 13, 1805.

DEAR SIR, — I thank you for your Lecture on Tobacco<sup>1</sup> which I received this morning and have read with much pleasure. Having been a great Offender in the Use of this Weed in some parts of my Life, I may not be an unprejudiced Judge: but I know that the practice may be forborne without any sensible Inconvenience. I lived many years in France and in England and, after my return, in America, without any Use of the Pipe or Cigar. And I am very sensible that great caution and moderation are necessary in the Use of them, as well as in other Ways of taking Tobacco. Many times I have been inspired by a thoughtless Excess, and now after a frequent Use of it, for three

<sup>1</sup> *Cautions to young Persons concerning Health, . . . showing the Evil Tendency of the Use of Tobacco.* Cambridge, 1805.



score Years, with some intervals, I am unable to take into my mouth a morsel no bigger than a swan Shot without sensible and immediate Injury. One quarter of the Quantity I have used in some parts of my Life, I fully believe would now kill me immediately. I heartily wish you Success in your Labours to restrain if not wholly to discredit the Use of it.

With Surprise and Grief I find by your Lecture that the Use of Cyder is become unfashionable at Colledge. The Apple is adapted to this Climate as well as Limes, Lemons, and Oranges to the West Indies: and I fear the decay of Health at the University is owing to the Use of Wine and Spirits instead of Cyder, at least as much as to the consumption of Cigars. Rhenish or Mozelle Wine would be better for us than Sherry or Madeira: but Cider is better than either. Cyder a year, or two years, or three years old is all the Liquor I can drink without inconvenience to my health.

Happy to hear that your Lecture is well received, by the public at large as well as by your Pupils. I wish Success to all your other Labours for the benefit of our fellow Men and remain, as ever your hearty Friend and very humble Servant.

QUINCY, *Feb.* 19, 1805.

DEAR SIR, — When I wrote you a line of acknowledgment for your Lecture upon Tobacco, I kept no Copy of it, not expecting to ever hear any thing more of it, and I really remember very little that was in it.

Tobacco, I have found by long Experience, having learned the Use of it upon Ponds of Ice, when skaiting with Boys at eight years of Age, to be a very dangerous Vegetable, extreamly apt to steal upon a Man and urge him to very pernicious Excesses. In Addition to the physical Effects of it, which you have so well exposed, it consumes an enormous proportion of precious time, and prevents application both to Business and to Study, in a very criminal degree. It has also very hurtful Effects on the Memory. I would now give any Thing for the time that has been stolen from me by this Thief. The Habit of it is the worse, when acquired and fixed in early Life, on account of the difficulty and the danger of ever afterwards renouncing it altogether.

During the four years that I passed at Colledge there was not a single death among the Scholars: and I have always believed that the almost universal health among the Students, was to be

ascribed, next to early rising and beef and mutton Pies at Commons; to the free Use of Cider and the very moderate Use of Wine and ardent Spirits. When our Barrells and Bottles in the Cellar were empty, we used to Size it at the Buttery,<sup>1</sup> and I never shall forget, how refreshing and salubrious we found it, hard as it often was. I have heard of a hard Cyder Club which subsisted for many years at Colledge, though I never belonged to it, and have heard that the Members of it were remarkably healthy, not only while Undergraduates but in the after Course of their Lives.

Many of the longest Livers and healthiest Men that I have known, have made a free Use of this Liquor all their days, for example, the venerable old Champion of Calvinism and Athanasianism, the Reverend Mr. Niles of Monatiquot,<sup>2</sup> was all his days a Lover and liberal Drinker of it. One of his Parish drolly said: "Our Mr. Niles would not drink a drop of Rum for the World, but he will drink as much Cyder as any Indian." This Gentleman lived till near ninety I believe and always remarkably healthy and hardy. His Son,

<sup>1</sup> To score an account for the drink.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. Samuel Niles (1674-1762), pastor of the church at Brintree for forty-eight years.

Samuel Niles, once a Judge of the common Pleas at Boston<sup>1</sup> lived I believe to ninety six, and remarkably healthy always. When was a healthier Man than Dr. Hitchcock of Pembroke,<sup>2</sup> and who made a more constant and liberal Use of it always however with temperance? To these I could add many other Examples.

One of the ablest and most experienced Physicians in Virginia told me, about six Years ago, that in thirty years practice in that State he had invariably found, that those who drank Cyder for their ordinary Beverage were the most healthy and the longest Livers, that those who drank Wine or ardent Spirits tempered with Water, though temperate Men, were not so healthy and ended their days sooner.

I have, habitually drank the Wines of Spain, France, Germany and Holland in all their varieties diluted with Water, and I have drank the mild Porter and Table Beer of London in all their perfection; but I never found any of them agree so well with my health as the Cyder of New England. It is true I seldom drink it under a year old, and often two and sometimes three.

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Niles (1711-1804), which would give him ninety-three years.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. Gad Hitchcock (1719-1803).

It seems to me, Sir, that Nature has planted the Antidote near to the Poison, and that a kind Providence has ordered the productions of the Earth to grow in a manner adapted to the Circumstances of the Clymate. And the Cranberries, Barberries, Currents, and Cyder of New England are better adapted to the health of the Inhabitants than any other fruits.

I have no Objections to your laughing with your friends over my frivolous Garrulity: and if you publish a second Edition of your Lecture, as I hope you will, you may make any Use of my Name in a note that your discretion will justify: but I pray you not to insert any formal Extracts from such Trash as this and my former Letter. I am, Sir, as usual your Friend and Servant.

QUINCY, *July 24, 1805.*

DEAR SIR, — In the course of your industrious researches, in natural History have you ever given a particular Attention to the Generation of Shell fish? <sup>1</sup> Will you be so good as to inform me in

<sup>1</sup> This letter is given as an example of the manner in which John Adams handled a scientific matter. The collection includes many pages on "barilla," but they give nothing that could not be found in the encyclopædias of the day.



what Book this Subject has been most fully treated? I suspect, but it is only a Suspicion, that a great Part of them are hatched by the Sun, upon the Surface of the Ocean; and that this process has been carried on, from the beginning of the World, on every part of every Sea. How can we otherwise account for those immense quantities of Shells, which we know exist? The Medusa, which English and American Sailors, call, the Portuguese Man of War, and is found sailing in every Sea, is a Shell fish in Embrio, the Spat or Egg, as I conjecture is hatched by the Sun, on the Surface of the Water. The Spat or Eggs of Oysters float on the Waves and are deposited on the Sands and flats, all round the Island of Great Britain. At Cowes, on the Isle of Wight, I saw boats from Colchester, daily employed in collecting this Spat, to carry home, to be deposited on the Oyster Grounds at that place, where they grow very fast. Whether the Eggs laid by the Shell fish at the Bottom of the Sea, are light enough to rise to the Surface, and are there blown about with the Waves by the Winds, until they are hatched by the Warmth of the Sun, I know not and can only conjecture. Mr. Mappa of New York, observed in the Eastern Asiatic Seas, various Species of foam floating on

the Waves, which he thought preparatory matter for testaceous and crustaceous fishes.

On my Passage to America from England in 1788, the *Lucretia* was becalmed, for many hours in the Gulph Stream. Seeing a Multitude of Portuguese Men of War in all directions about the Ship when Captain Callahan sent out his Boats to ascertain the Course and Velocity of the Current, I requested the Boatswains to take some pails and bring me a number of those Curiosities. They readily agreed, and made of it a gay amusement. When they took hold of them, by the feelers, they would affect to roar out as if they had been shot. The Creature has a quality in him, which the Seamen call a caustic, a corrosive, and sometimes a Poison. I know not whether it has been ascertained to be any thing of this kind, or whether it is Electricity. It is something which gives a Shock, when it is touched. They brought me a Number, say ten or a dozen. Each was a Bundle of Gristle and Strings, some of them as large as a Hat. Each of them had a Shell fish, growing in the inside in the Center of this Gristle. I saw a Cockle in one, a Muscle in another, a Scollop in a third, and one of the great Clams in a fourth. These observations suggested to me the Idea, which is,

however, nothing more than conjecture, that the Eggs may be hatched by the Sun, and float about in the Shape of the Medusa, till the Shell fish is completely formed, and by its weight drops out of its decaying gristly Vehicle, and sinks down to the Bottom, for the nourishment of Sharks, Tortoises, or other voracious fishes, whose Jaws and teeth are strong enough to grind, and Stomachs capable of digesting Shell and fish together. In a warm Morning in calm Weather, I have seen, a multitude of little red, or yellow Specks, no bigger than a thimble, floating in all directions round the Ship and been told by the Seamen that they were all young Portuguese Men of War.

Reading the Manuscript Journal of Captain Joseph Ingraham's Voyage to the North West Coast of America, round Cape Horn in the *Hope* in 1790 in the tenth page of the first volume, I find this account that: "On the 12th of December we observed many ridges in the Sea, extending South West and North East, as far as the Eye could reach, which discoloured the Water very much, resembling blood. on dipping some of it up, it was found to be Fish Spawn. We passed through vast quantities of these on this passage, but as to their peculiar Species, I am not Philosopher enough

to determine." In the Second Volume of the Journal, page 78, on the 20 of June, 1791, Lat. 36. 58 N. Long. 83. 35 West of Boston: "The Sea was full of what Seamen call Portuguese Men of War — Clusters of Barnacles, such as fasten to Ships Bottoms, but these were Soft, without Shell. Besides these we picked up several Shells resembling garden Snails, but of an elegant deep blue Colour. On putting these into a small Vial of Spirits, the whole was immediately tinged but much paler than the Shell; these contained an Animal Substance, which would occasion any part it touched to smart exceedingly." <sup>1</sup>

Nature, it should seem has provided these Creatures with that corrosive or electric quality, to prevent the larger fish from devouring them in their tender growing state.

I know not whether the causes which conspire to the formation of Shells or the manner of their operation, have been discovered. Réaumur's Hypothesis, is scarcely plausible, that this Substance is formed by the perspiration of the Animal hardening on its Surface: a transudation of earthy particles united only by juxtaposition.

<sup>1</sup> An extract from Ingraham's journal was printed in *Collections* of the Massachusetts Historical Society, vol. II, p. 20, but it does not include the quotations by Mr. Adams.

Hérissant alledges Experiment for the discovery that they are organical, and composed of two Substances, one cretaceous and the other of an Animal nature. By an Analysis he separated, these parts, and found in one of them a soft Substance, consisting of innumerable membranes of a retiform Appearance, which constitute the Animal part of the Shell, and through a Microscope exhibit proofs of a vascular Structure. This membranous Substance is a continuation of the tendinous fibres, by which the Animal is fixed to the Shell, the hardness of which is owing to the earthy Particles conveyed through the Vessels of the Animal, which encrust the Meshes, formed by these reticular filaments or membranous Substances.

The Shells which I saw in the various Medusas which I examined exhibited an Appearance conformable to this Theory. The Fibres and Membranes were distinguishable by the naked Eye, and appeared to be filling up and hardening with a viscous matter, circulating from some central part of the System, i. e. of the Animal. The Shells were in various Stages of their Growth. In some the Bivalves appeared to be nearly completed and almost closed. In others the Membranes and fibres of the Shells were but beginning to assume

their organical Shapes and were yet little more than a Jelly.

The whole Object called the Medusa, resembles in some respects a Walnut or more properly a Cocoa Nut. In the Center is the Meat or Milk, surrounded by a very close and hard Shell, over which is another Shell or Coat of a more loose fibrous and coarse contexture. The Portuguese Man of War has an Animal at the Center, over whom a crustaceous Covering grows first, and over that a more loose and gelatinous Covering with as many Strings growing round it and hanging down in the Water, as Medusa had of Snakes for her Hair. But the whole appears to be one System, all growing together from the same Seed or Egg as the Center and Spring of Life and increase.

I at first intended only to have stated the facts which I saw and have asked your explanation of them: But I have wandered into very uncertain Speculations which I hope you will pardon, to your very good friend and humble Servant.

QUINCY, *August 7th*, 1805.

DEAR SIR, — From early Youth I have heard it lamented among Men of Letters that we had neither a natural History of this Country, nor any



Person possessed of a Taste for such Inquiries. The Science in general was not so much desired as a particular Examination of the Beasts, Birds, Fishes, Trees, Plants, Flowers, Fossills, etc. peculiar to North America. Mr. Hutchinson, at the close of the first volume of his History of Massachusetts Bay, page 486 says: "A natural History of the Country will afford a Volume of itself, and it is a Work much wanted, and would entertain the curious. The botanical part would be very useful. I have not leisure and if I had, I have not a Genius for such an Undertaking. I wish some Person, who has both the one and the other would undertake it." This Work was published in 1764 and I was very much pleased to see such an Observation in it.

In 1774 on my Journey to Congress, I was invited at Norwalk in Connecticutt to see a Collection made by a Mr. Arnold an Englishman of Birds, Insects, especially Butterflies, made wholly in that Neighbourhood, and beautifully preserved. There was a great Variety, and among many others which were very curious, were twelve different Species of owls. This Cabinet was afterwards sold to Governor Tryon of New York and by him sent to England and sold to Sir Ashton

Lever, in whose Possession I saw it again, ten or a dozen years afterwards in London.<sup>1</sup> In 1778 I went to France, where I saw many Cabinets, and some of more curiosity and magnificence than Use: but they all served to impress upon my mind, the Utility of some Establishment in America for collecting Specimens of the Works of Nature peculiar to us. In 1779 in composing the Frame of Government for the State of Massachusetts I thought it, the best opportunity which might ever occur to promote a design of this kind and impress upon the Minds of the People a sense of the Importance of it. With this View, I inserted the Second Section of the fifth Chapter in these Words:

#### THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF LITTERATURE

WISDOM and Knowledge, as well as Virtue, diffused generally among the Body of the People, being necessary for the preservation of their Rights and Liberties, and as these depend on Spreading the Opportunities and Advantages of Education in the various parts of the Country, and among the different orders of the People, it shall be the duty of the Legislatures and Magistrates, in all future periods of this Common-

<sup>1</sup> The Leverian Museum, collected by Sir Ashton Lever (1729-1788), was exhibited at Leicester House, London, but was dispersed by auction in 1806, the sale occupying sixty-five days.

wealth, to cherish the Interests of Literature and the Sciences, and all Seminaries of them; especially the University at Cambridge, public Schools and grammar Schools in the Towns; to encourage private Societies and public institutions, by rewards and immunities, for the promotion of Agriculture, Arts, Sciences, commerce, trades, manufactures *and a natural History of the Country*; to countenance and inculcate the Principles of humanity and general benevolence, public and private Charity, industry and frugality, honesty and punctuality in their dealings, Sincerity, good humour and all Social Affections and generous Sentiments among the People.

As the Words flowed from my Pen, from the heart in reality rather than the head, in composing this paragraph, I could not help laughing, to myself alone in my Closet, at the Oddity of it. I expected it would be attack'd, in the Convention from all quarters, on the Score of Affectation, Pedantry, Hypocrisy, and above all Oeconomy. Many Ideas in it implied expence: and I knew then as well as I have known since that too large a portion of the People and their Representatives, had rather starve their Souls than draw upon their purses to pay for nourishment of them: and therefore no mercy was to be expected for a Paragraph,

that I would not now exchange for a Sceptre, and wish may be engraved on my Tomb Stone.

But to my great Surprize, instead of Objections, it was received with Applause and adopted I believe with Unanimity, and without any Amendment. Even the Natural History of the Country received no Opposition.

I have a little more of Anecdote to give you before I make the Application. After my Return from France in 1779, I was invited by the Corporation to a dinner made at College in honour of the Chevalier de la Luzerne the Minister Plenipotentiary from the King of France, and his Suite Mr. Marbois, Mr. Otto, Mr. La Forest, the Captain De La Chaudière and his officers of the Frigate *Le Sensible*, in which we all came over together. Happening to sit at Table next to Dr. Cooper, I engaged him in Conversation, for the whole time on the Subject of a natural History of the Country and the means of promoting it. I suggested to him the Plan of an American Academy of Arts and Sciences, to be established by the Legislature, as a Corporation with Capacity to receive donations in Land and Money. I told him that I had heard in France much conversation concerning the Philosophical Society in Philadelphia and their Volume

of transactions, which was considered as a laudable Institution and an honour to our Country. The Massachusetts possessed many Men of Science and Letters, who would be capable of promoting knowledge and benefiting Mankind as much as any others. The Doctor was afraid it would injure the College: I thought it would serve it, for no doubt the principal officers of it would be Members, and the Meetings of the Academy might, some of them at least be at Cambridge. I earnestly importuned the Doctor to think of it, converse with the Governors of the College and Members of the Legislature on the Subject, and promote the Project if he found it practicable. This the Doctor did to such effect, that after my arrival in France the second time, in the next Winter, the General Court established the American Academy of Arts and Sciences,<sup>1</sup> out of which have grown the Society for the Promotion of Agriculture,<sup>2</sup> the Historical Society<sup>3</sup> and of late the Professorship of natural History.

I never was consulted directly nor indirectly about the Establishment of this Professorship, untill it was compleated and the Professor chosen.

<sup>1</sup> Incorporated by act of the General Court, May 4, 1780.

<sup>2</sup> Incorporated March 7, 1792.

<sup>3</sup> Incorporated 1794.

Two or three years ago, I mentioned to Dr. Willard, that I had heard confused Rumours of a design to purchase a Botanical Garden, and that I was pleased with the Idea and should be willing to contribute my mite towards the Subscription for it. The President gave me no Answer and I heard no more of it, till I was notified that Mr. Peck <sup>1</sup> was appointed and that I was a Visitor. Since that they have chosen me President of the Visitors and President of the Agricultural Society. Who has been at the Bottom of all this and what their Motives or designs I know not. Although I never saw Mr. Peck, till he was appointed a Professor, I have a very good Opinion of his Talents, Manners, and Character. It is not impossible however, that the whole might have been concealed from me, till the Professor was elected, from a Jealousy that I should prefer Dr. Waterhouse, whom I knew, to Mr. Peck, whom I did not know.

The Persons whom you design, by the Essex Junto, and such a Sett exists in every State in the Union, have too much of an exclusive and monopolizing Spirit as I, as well as you, have experienced. But they are possessed of so much Wealth

<sup>1</sup> William Dandridge Peck (d. 1822), professor of natural history, 1805-1822.



and so great a Portion of the Talents of the Country, and at the same time so many Virtues, and good Principles, and are so nearly right, tho not entirely so in System, that I am convinced, without them, the People of America cannot preserve themselves from Anarchy: and therefore, I am disposed to as little severity against them as possible: though, of all Men in the World, I have the least obligation to them. To them I owe my Motto *Sic Vos non Vobis mellificatis Apes*.<sup>1</sup> Even Mr. Pearson,<sup>2</sup> who was very full of Mr. Lowell, and I knew not whom, but totally forgot, perhaps he was ignorant of the real Author of it all.

I am glad to see you on the Wings of mighty Winds flying all abroad. But Clouds and Medusas must be the subject of another Letter.

QUINCY, *October 29, 1805.*

DEAR SIR, — I have heard, as you insinuate, that Sterne was a wicked Man; and there are traits of a false Character, in his Writings: yet the Benevolence, Generosity, Simpathy and Humanity that fill the Eyes and bosoms of the readers of his Works, will plead forever for their immortality.

<sup>1</sup> A line of Virgil, when he complained that Augustus had rewarded Bathyllus for verses written by Virgil.

<sup>2</sup> Eliphalet Pearson.

Virtues and Vices, Wisdom and Folly, Talents and imbecility, Services and demerits are so blended in most of the distinguished Sons of Men, that there is no knowing what Judgment to form of them, or what to do with them. Julian, in that ingenious Fable, The Caesars, throws headlong into the gulph of Tartarus, all the Tyrants; Alexander, Caesar, Augustus, Trajan and Constantine, are made to acknowledge that Fame, Power, or Pleasure were their Objects; Marcus Aurelius alone was confessed to have aimed Singly at the good of the People. I know not whether the number of pure Characters, among Mankind in general will bear a greater proportion. The Number of unexceptionable Romances is not greater. Most of the fashionable ones, deserve to be slighted more than Sterne. Yet I own myself to be childish enough to be amused with their fictions, tho' not so much as with true History. *Rien n'est beau, que le vrai: Nil amoenum nisi verum*, ought to be a fundamental Maxim, not only in Religion and Government but in all other Arts and Sciences, especially in Rhetoric and oratory, Tragedy, Comedy, and Romance. Many Romances however, have not even the Resemblance of truth. You will do more good, and get more honor and

money too, by persevering in your labours, which are really usefull, than in writing Novels.

I am willing you should call this the Age of Frivolity as you do: and would not object if you had named it the Age of Folly, Vice, Frenzy, Fury, Brutality, Daemons, Buonaparte, Tom Paine, or the Age of the burning Brand from the bottomless Pitt: or any thing but the Age of Reason.<sup>1</sup> I know not whether any Man in the World has had more influence on its inhabitants or affairs for the last thirty years than Tom Paine. There can be no severer Satyr on the Age. For such a mongrel between Pigg and Puppy, begotten by a wild Boar on a Bitch Wolf, never before in any Age of the World was suffered by the Poltroonery of mankind, to run through such a Career of Mischief. Call it then the Age of Paine. He deserves it much more, than the Courtezan who was consecrated to represent the Goddess in the Temple at Paris, and whose name, Tom has given to the Age. The real intellectual faculty has nothing to do with the Age the Strumpet or Tom. So much for this time and on this Topick, from your most obedient

<sup>1</sup> The first part of the *Age of Reason* was published in London and Paris in 1794, and the second part in 1795, and both were at once reprinted in the United States.

QUINCY, *Jan. 3, 1806.*

DEAR SIR, — I have derived as much consolation in Life, from Horace as from Epictetus. I say *Buvons, écrivons, vivons*, cher Horace, as well as that all our Happiness depends upon ourselves with the Stoick. I thank you for calling Horace to my Aid in your favour of Decr. 28. Alphius<sup>1</sup> was such a philosopher as Seneca, who griped the Britons, or as Brutus who was so angry with Cicero when he was Governor of Cilicia because he would not, against all Laws human and divine, compel Brutus's Debtors in that province to pay him twelve per cent a month. The extravagant Praises of a Country Life, are generally as sincere as those of Alphius. Shenstone's delight in his Leasowes<sup>2</sup> which I have seen, was constantly poisoned with secret Wishes for public Life. And as much as I am charmed with my Mount Wollaston, I would not wholly forsake the bauling Bar, if my generous Country had not destroyed my organs of Speech, before she turned me loose to get my bread upon a farm. Horace is full of

<sup>1</sup> Alpheus Mytilenæus?

<sup>2</sup> The Leasowes had been bought by Shenstone's grandfather and in the hands of the poet became one of the show places for its gardens. Gray recognized that Shenstone lived in retirement against his will.

Advice to me and when I received your Letter I was reading his 16. Ode, Book 3. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Without particular Inquiry or Information I have understood that my Son has accepted the Professorship upon terms which have been agreed: and that he is looking for a house at Cambridge, as near Boston as possible.<sup>2</sup> The Appointment of Mr. Ames<sup>3</sup> will be an encouragement to him. Mr. Ames's manners are popular and his Accomplishments brilliant. I wish you may have all the Satisfaction in him which you anticipate and I have no reason to doubt that you will. My Son will undoubtedly be your Friend, as is his Father.

QUINCY, *April 2, 1806.*

DEAR SIR, — Your favour of March 30th I received last Evening. The Subject of it is of great importance.

<sup>1</sup> Here was inserted the full ode.

<sup>2</sup> Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory. In a letter to Waterhouse of October 3, 1805, John Adams wrote: "whether my Son will make one among you or not, I am not able to Say: and I am apprehensive that more will be expected of him than he will be able to perform, if he should. I know not how any thing can be said, upon Rhetorick and oratory which has not been said and written an hundred times before, by the greatest Masters. I shall not however discourage him."

<sup>3</sup> Fisher Ames, who was elected president of the college, December 11, 1805, but declined the appointment.

I have been absent from my Country and my home for so great a part of the last two and thirty years that I have never had an opportunity to be intimately acquainted with the Affairs of the University or the Characters of the Gentlemen who have the immediate or mediate Government of it. These I have seen on days of Ceremony and formality only; occasions which will never let a Man into a precise Knowledge of the Virtues, Talents, or Accomplishments of any body. I have therefore studiously and from principle abstained from any interference, or giving any Advice or using any influence. I should have acquiesced had Mr. Pearson<sup>1</sup> been chosen: so I should had Dr. Kirkland been elected: so I did when Mr. Ames was appointed.

Mr. Webber is now elected and confirmed, and has accepted. The Time for opposition is past. The Die is cast. Every Friend to the University ought now to Strengthen the hands and encourage the heart of the President, as far as he can. I shall therefore chearfully submit to the Judgment of the Corporation and Overseers, without a murmur. All that I have seen and heard of Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Eliphalet Pearson had been acting president of the college since the death of President Willard in 1804. Dr. Kirkland succeeded Mr. Webber in 1810.



Webber is much in his favour. A Man who has Enemies, will in that Station soon find Friends. The advantage of an extensive Knowledge of the World in that Situation is not to be estimated very highly. Mr. Ames's Knowledge of the World, was in my Opinion not of so good a quality for the Use of a College as Dr. Webber's: too much of it was derived from A. Hamilton and his Worshipers. As a Writer and Speaker he had not that pure Simplicity which is the essential foundation of all good Writing. His metaphors and Similes were scattered in too great profusion. His Garment was more Embroidery than Velvet: more gold lace than cloth. There was danger of his introducing into the University a false taste. Had he accepted however I should not have said a Word. Dr. Kirkland has more genius and classical taste than Ames, Pearson or Webber: yet either of them would have done well enough.

I regret the loss of Dr. Pearson to the Society and lament his personal Misfortune.<sup>1</sup> Elections, even when made by the most learned and virtuous Men, surrounded as they always are in popular

<sup>1</sup> On the election of Professor Webber to the presidency, Dr. Pearson resigned. He was Hancock Professor of Hebrew and other Oriental Languages.

governments, by Competitors and their Parties stimulated by all Sorts of political factions, make wild work with the feelings and Interests and often with the rights of individuals.

A certain Circle of Gentlemen in and about Boston, have for many years laid a kind of Seige to the College as well as to the Pulpits of the Town : and for what I know their Influence may have been beneficial. They are now aiming as I suppose at Mr. McKean for Mathematical Professor,<sup>1</sup> who is said, I know not how truly to be qualified for it and worthy of it.

As you justly observe it is very difficult for a Man who has the Government of Children old or young, at all times to preserve the Serenity and Moderation of his temper. Some there are who have the happy faculty in a good degree : and some indeed have too much of it to be honest Men and faithfull Preceptors.

The cold blood with which the World can see, faithfull officers cashiered, trusty servants discarded, and the best ships hove down in the Mud to rot, is not much in favour of the Benevolence of

<sup>1</sup> Joseph McKean became Boylston Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory in 1809, in succession to John Quincy Adams, and after declining the professorship of mathematics.

human Nature. But what is this to the Pleasure which millions discovered in beholding the delicious Spectacle of the Guillotine in the Place de Louis quinze? Spouting Trunks and gasping Heads were the delight of the Eyes of many People far above the Character of the Paris mob.

Alas for the *Sors humanitatis*, yet we must not hate it, nor despise it, but make the best of it, and believe it on the whole better than nothing. Nay, we must on the whole believe it to be social and benevolent in grain. At least this Opinion has not yet been given up, and I believe never will be, by your friend and servant.

QUINCY, *June 29, 1806.*

DEAR SIR, — I rejoice to find by your Letter of the 26. and by my Son's Conversation, that his commencement of a residence at Cambridge has been agreeable to you and to him. He could not in his present Circumstances have been so happily situated as he is. Two such Men as Dr. Waterhouse and J. Q. Adams will find in the society of each other, and in the sciences and Litterature an inexhaustible fund of Amusement and of information. If his health and his other Engagements will allow him a career of three or four Years, I

doubt not he will open a Road before the students to all that can be known, on the subjects of Rhetorick and Eloquence.

It is my ardent wish and confident hope that he will make no unnecessary difficulties with the Government of the College, in any of its Branches. I wish he had delivered his first Lecture on fryday, even if the determination of the Corporation, had authorized him to repeat his first Lecture to the Sophomores, at their subsequent Appearance. If I were in his case, and the Corporation should decide against admitting the sophomores before Commencement, I would after Commencement repeat all the preceedent Lectures, although I might add a new Lecture, in every instance at the same time.<sup>1</sup> If the scholars should be detained a

<sup>1</sup> John Adams was better known for his force and earnestness in speaking than for graces of oratory. Of John Quincy Adams as a speaker, Emerson, who heard him in his later years, has given an account by name in his essay on Eloquence: "It is said that one of the best readers in his time was the late President John Quincy Adams. I have heard that no man could read the Bible with such powerful effect. I can easily believe it, though I never heard him speak in public until his fine voice was much broken by age. But the wonders he could achieve with that cracked and disobedient organ showed what power might have belonged to it in early manhood. If 'indignation makes good verses,' as Horace says, it is not less true that a good indignation makes an excellent speech. In the early years of this century, Mr. Adams, at that time a member of the United States Senate at Washington, was elected Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory in Harvard College. When he read his first

whole hour instead of half an hour it would not hurt them. I am sorry to hear that speaking has been considered an irksome task, which ought to be a delightful employment and an object of Ambition.

Eloquence however can never be restored to its ancient Glory without more moral sentiments and public Virtue than I believe remain in the World. Duty, Virtue, Obligation, Patriotism, appear to me to have become through the whole Earth at least with the Majority, mere stalking Horses to Ambition and Avarice.

With my best compliments to your good Lady, I remain with high esteem and respect your friend and humble servant.

QUINCY, *January 8, 1807.*

DEAR SIR, — I received your favour of the Second of this month, yesterday. I do not understand

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lectures in 1806, not only the students heard him with delight, but the hall was crowded by the Professors and by unusual visitors. I remember when, long after, I entered college [1817], hearing the story of the numbers of coaches in which his friends came from Boston to hear him. On his return in the winter to the Senate in Washington, he took such ground in the debates of the following session as to lose the sympathy of many of his constituents in Boston. When, on his return from Washington, he resumed his lectures in Cambridge, his class attended, but the coaches from Boston did not come, and, indeed, many of his political friends deserted

your reason for calling our Forefathers Brownists.<sup>1</sup> I should call them rather Robinsonians.<sup>2</sup> But that our Forefathers resided twelve Years at Leyden, and that they Worshipped in the Building, where I attended divine Service for several months, I have no more doubt than I have of the Existence of a University at Leyden. Mr. John Luzac,<sup>3</sup> one of the most learned and virtuous Men in Europe, his Father and Unkle, both of them above seventy years of Age, informed me, of this fact. This whole Family were as perfectly informed in the History of that Country as any Men in the United Provinces. Mr. John Luzac, who first procured me a Sight of that Church and who has since been Professor of Faderlandsche Historie, in the University, assured me that this was the Place assigned for public Worship to those English Emigrants. Dr. McLane and Mr. Dumas<sup>4</sup> never doubted it. In my first Memorial to their High Mightinesses,

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him." Without naming Adams there is another account of his speaking in the essay on Behavior.

<sup>1</sup> Followers of Robert Browne (1550?-1633?).

<sup>2</sup> John Robinson (1576?-1625), pastor of the Pilgrim Fathers.

<sup>3</sup> Jean Luzac (1746-1807) became editor of the *Gazette de Leyde* in 1772 and greatly aided the American cause during the War for Independence.

<sup>4</sup> On the services of Charles William Frederick Dumas in the American cause, see Wharton, *Revolutionary Diplomatic Correspondence*, vol. I, p. 603.



I asserted that our forefathers had resided twelve Years at Leyden,<sup>1</sup> and although that Memorial was a Subject of Animadversion in all the Seven United Provinces, no denial of this fact, nor any insinuation of the Uncertainty of it, ever appeared. The Building itself had the Appearance of Antiquity, enough and more than enough to make the fact probable.

I have no more doubt of the Fact than I have that I attended Dr. Macclaine's Church at the Hague.

Dr. Holmes <sup>2</sup> is rendering very grateful and useful service to his Country by his indefatigable Researches into its antiquities. I wish him all the Success and Encouragement he can desire. But our Country, to its disgrace is disposed to encourage a thousand foolish republications from Europe rather than one usefull Work of their own Growth. In short our Literature, as well as our

<sup>1</sup> "The first planters of the four northern States found in this country an asylum from persecution, and resided here from the year 1608 to the year 1620, twelve years preceding their migration. They were entertained, and have transmitted to posterity, a grateful remembrance of that protection and hospitality, and especially of that religious liberty they found here, having sought them in vain in England." Memorial, April 19, 1781. *Works*, vol. VII, p. 399.

<sup>2</sup> Abiel Holmes (1763-1837) father of Oliver Wendell Holmes and compiler of *Annals of America*, first published in 1805.

Commerce and our Politicks are monopolized by European Capitalists and our People will have it so. I am Sir, with much Esteem, yours.

QUINCY, *Jan. 21, 1807.*

DEAR SIR, — Robinson was not only a Man of Sense and Learning, Piety and Virtue, but of a Catholic tolerant Spirit and remarkable humanity. He resembled the two Shepards <sup>1</sup> one of whom was settled at Charleston and the other at Cambridge. Neither of the three were for renouncing Communion with the Church of England. Brown was for excommunicating all, who differed from him in his most rigid notions. It is greatly to be regretted that Robinson did not live to come over, for he probably would have had influence enough to have restrained the early Emigrants from many Extravagancies which have diminished the reverence due to their general Character.

I congratulate you on the Amusement and Instruction you have found in the Sermons of Dr. Isaac Barrow.<sup>2</sup> His Character and Writings are

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Shepard (1604-1649), pastor of the church in Cambridge, Mass., 1636 to 1649, and Thomas Shepard (1635-1677), his son, pastor of the church in Charlestown, Mass., 1659 to his death.

<sup>2</sup> Isaac Barrow (1630-1677) was the first to occupy the chair of mathematics established under the will of Henry Lucas in Cambridge University and he was succeeded in it by Sir Isaac Newton

too much neglected. In Science and Learning he has had very few equals in England. He was the Predecessor, of Sir Isaac Newton in the Professorship of Mathematicks and natural Philosophy, and contributed largely, as I conjecture, to the formation of that mighty Genius both in Science and Literature. I am not very largely read in English Sermons. Dr. Tillotson, Dr. Sam. Clark, Atterbury, Hoadley, Dr. Shirlock, Dr. Secker, South, Swift, Sterne, and Blair, I occasionally read in Part. But I cannot think any of them deserve to be read more than Barrow. The English Divines who have ever read him call him a Quarry both of Sentiment and Expression. I have somewhere read that the Earl of Chatham was a constant Reader and great Admirer of him,<sup>1</sup> as the greatest Magazine of nervous Expressions in the English Language. I bought his Works in England and have read the Sermons you enumerate, and admire them as you do. But you know the

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in 1669. In the library of John Adams are the *Works* of Barrow in three volumes, issued in 1700 by Dr. John Tillotson; his *Lectiones Opticae et Geometricae*, London, 1674, which had been revised for the press by Newton; and *A Treatise of the Pope's Supremacy* (4th ed.), London, 1700, which was not published in his lifetime.

<sup>1</sup> Chatham, in qualifying himself in early life for public speaking, read and reread the sermons, committing them to memory; and Pitt, at the recommendation of his father, studied them frequently and deeply.

Taste of this Age both in Europe and America. The nice palates of our modern men of Letters, must have polished Periods and fashionable Words. A few Words out of date and Sentences not fashioned upon the model of Hume, Robertson, Johnson, Gibbon, or Burke, or Junius, will give them such disgust that they will throw away the most sterling Wisdom to take up Reviews, Magazines, Maria Williams,<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Aikin.<sup>2</sup>

Were I a Professor of Oratory at Harvard College I would give a Lecture at least, if not a Course of Lectures upon Dr. Barrow.

I suppose all Attempts however, to bring him into fashion would be abortive. The Bent of the Reviews, etc., in England and Scotland is to run down out of Sight all the old Writers. I see they are now endeavouring to cry down Mr. Locke. His Ideas of Liberty and Toleration are not enough sublimated for them. They are more tender of Tom Paine. Locke's Essay on Human Understanding, however, I still think one of the greatest Works of modern or ancient times. But alas! of what value is the opinion of

J. ADAMS?

<sup>1</sup> Helen Maria Williams (1762-1827), whose letters from France, strongly favoring the Revolution, may have created the prejudice in John Adams.

<sup>2</sup> John Aikin (1747-1822), author of *Evenings at Home* and editor of the *Monthly Magazine*. He edited, with others, *General Biography* in ten volumes (1799-1815), which still has merit.

QUINCY, *December 18, 1809.*

DEAR SIR, — I have received your favour of Nov. 20th and regret very much that your Employments would not allow you to spend a Night with Us.

I did not before know but you was one of those respectable People who do not read the *Patriot*.<sup>1</sup>

I must be cautious of Affectations: and not go out of my Way to introduce Things. When I come to mention the Sailing of the *South Carolina*, I shall mention some of the Passengers. Will you be so good as to tell me who the Gentlemen Passengers were besides yourself and Major Jackson? And especially inform me of the day on which you sailed.<sup>2</sup> It will be a long time before I come to it. Be Patient.

Your “concern of Mind to write upon Politicks”

<sup>1</sup> The *Boston Patriot* was established in March 1809 by David Everett and Isaac Munroe. It was to this newspaper that Adams contributed a series of letters in 1809 and 1810, afterward issued as *Correspondence of the Late President Adams*, Boston, 1809 [—10].

<sup>2</sup> “On or about the 10th of August, 1781, the *South Carolina*, commodore Gillon, put to sea from the Texel, with Mr. Searle, Colonel Trumbull, Major Jackson, Mr. Bromfield, Dr. Waterhouse and Charles Adams on board as passengers. These had for some time composed a very pleasant American Society; but now I was left alone with Mr. Thaxter. We regretted the loss of so much good company, and that of Dr. Waterhouse as much as any. He had resided three or four years, and taken the degree of Dr. in medicine, in the university of Leyden, where I first became acquainted with him. During part of the time of my residence in Leyden, I found Waterhouse and my two sons boarded in the same house. I took

you will find to be a disease worse than the Itch or Pox Small or great. *Probatum est.*

This Distemper is not cured forever by having it once, or a hundred times. Nor is there any Kine Inoculation to mollify its Virulence or destroy its Contagion. Have a Care! *Facilis Descensus Averni.*

Our University, I hope, is now perfectly happy in all its Professors and Governors. But I must break off abruptly.

QUINCY, *January 10, 1810.*

DEAR SIR, — I thank you for your favour of Decr. 25 and the Extracts enclosed. I regret the loss of

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apartments in it, and finding him, though a sprightly genius, very studious and inquisitive, as well as sociable, I had no inquiries to make, but whether his moral character was good, and whether he was a loyal American. As to his morals, I could hear of no reproach or suspicion; as to his politics, though he came over from England, he came from the guardianship and pupilage of Dr. Fothergill, who was as good a friend to America, as any Englishman could be. He had inscribed himself on the records of matriculation, in the university of Leyden, *Liberæ Reipublicæ Americanæ Federatæ Civis*, and his conversation was in the style of a good American. I did not, therefore, hesitate to consider him, in some respects, as one of my family. This gentleman has now been so long known in the philosophical, medical and literary world, that it would be impertinent in me to say anything more of him at present, than that I wish him as happy as his benevolence and services to his fellow men have deserved." *Correspondence*, p. 572. The letter, dated February 8, 1810, appeared in the *Boston Patriot*, June 16, 1810.



your Visit and wish for that to come. The sooner the better.

Your entertaining Account of the Solemnities of the day at Plymouth interested me very much. Every Thing was in the Spirit of the times. Beaumarchais in his Figaro Says *Tout finit d'un Chanson*. Your Dialogue with a Lady was remarkable.<sup>1</sup> I should have no Scruples to return "her Love." For it is very certain I can never cease to love her, let her treat me with ever so much Injustice or Cruelty. I have long since found by Experience that when I have once conceived a real Friendship for another I can never lose it all.

I am one of "those Respectable People" who read the *Chronicle*. I have always read all Sides. The Country Physician has pleased me much. So has the Military Countryman.<sup>2</sup> I am of their Sect, for the present but if they change their Principles and Systems as much as some other

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. James (Mercy Otis) Warren, whose references to John Adams in her *History* had led to a break in their friendship.

<sup>2</sup> A communication, dated Roxbury, December 6, 1810, and signed "A Military Countryman" appeared in the *Independent Chronicle*, December 11, 1809; and a commendation of it, dated Cambridge, December 12, 1809, signed "A Country Physician," was printed in the same journal, December 18, 1809. The physician was undoubtedly Waterhouse.

denominations have done, I shall not hold myself obliged to change with them.

The Extracts from your Journal I should think, those Parts I mean which relate to Searle<sup>1</sup> and another, I should advise to be reserved from the Publick for the present.

My Compliments to your Nurse. Mine sends hers to you and yours. Pray do not let me wait very long for the Pleasure of your Company for a Night and a Day if you can spare it, to your steady Friend.

QUINCY, *Sep'r* 17, 1810.

DEAR SIR, — I know that Mother Harvard had Power to make D. D., M. D. and LL. D., as well as Batchelors and Masters: but never knew till now that she possessed the Prerogative of making Princes. It is a notable Epoque in our History. Why may she not make Dukes, Marquises, Viscounts, Earls, Barons, Knights, and Esquires?

If the Republicans wish and expect from me a History of the Rise and Progress of the Essex Junto, they know not what they wish. I do not like the Appellation of Essex Junto. It is old

<sup>1</sup> James Searle (1730?–97), a member of the Continental Congress who had come to the United Provinces in 1780 to obtain a loan for Pennsylvania.

Toryism, and is common to every State, City, town, and Village in the United States. There was not one without a Tory Junto in it, and their Heirs, Executors, Administrators, Sons, Cousins, etc., compose at this day an Essex Junto in every one of them. An History of the Essex Junto then would require an History of the whole American Community for fifty years. Let the Republicans remember, that it must contain at the same time an History of Democracy and Jacobinism, two Sects to whom the Essex Junto owe their Power and Importance. The Characters of Hancock, Adams, Bowdoin, Warren, and an hundred others, must come in. The Republicans would be as much offended as the Federalists by my History. But Alas, neither my Life would be long enough nor my Talents weighty enough to Accomplish one Year of the Fifty of such an History.

I rejoice to hear that the Governor<sup>1</sup> is better. His Life and Health are very precious to this Country at this time.

I read Las Casas:<sup>2</sup> and said *Aut Erasmi*, etc.

<sup>1</sup> Elbridge Gerry.

<sup>2</sup> "Of Governor Gerry's Opinion of Bonaparte," a contribution first printed in the *Boston Patriot*, August 15, 1810, and reprinted in the *Independent Chronicle* five days later. The signature "Las Casas" has not been identified.

The Style is fine. Not one of our Anthological Writers better.

I have received the Heads of your Lectures<sup>1</sup> and wish them Success.

In my own Time: in my own Way I will communicate what I please. But I will not be the Gladiator of a Faction: No, nor of a Party. Not one of the many Limbs that are limed for me shall catch the Bird, if I can avoid it.

The Speaker of The House of Commons is often called in Latin in other Parts of Europe, Orator, and often Prolocutor. The Man who is sett up in our Town Meetings and Ecclesiastical Counsells to be looked at and talk'd at, is called Moderator. I wish there could be a Moderator of the Senate and House too. Is it not passing Strange that I should become a Preacher of Moderation? In short, Waterhouse, in speaking of Titles of any kind in this Country as Discriminations of Station, or Condition, I can do nothing but pun and droll as you do.

QUINCY, *February 27th*, 1811.

DEAR SIR, — As I read the Essays of the elegant Botanist when they appeared in the *Monthly*

<sup>1</sup> *Heads of a Course of Lectures on Natural History.* Cambridge, 1810.

*Anthology*, with much pleasure, I am very glad to learn from your kind Letter of the 25th that they are to appear together in a Volume.<sup>1</sup> If our dear Countrymen had loved one another as well as some of them do England and Scotland, and if our Mecenas's encouraged American Literature as much as they do Scottish; this Volume would have appeared long ago, and an hundred others that lie sleeping in scattered and obscure Repositories.

Additions to them no doubt may be made, and the more the better: Corrections as far as I remember are very little wanted.

The Compliment offered<sup>2</sup> to me will be considered as an honor, not much deserved; for Fate has ordained that I should never have had it in my Power to do much good in any of the Capacities you mention. Yet it will be more flattering to me, than the long Dedications of Dryden by which he, poor Genius! hoped to get bread; or the lying Dedications and Panegyricks of Dr. Young by which he hoped to purchase a Bishopric. Neither Bread nor Promotion, as you very well know, are to be expected from Compliments to your Friend.

<sup>1</sup> *The Botanist*. Boston, 1811.

<sup>2</sup> The volume was dedicated to John Adams.

QUINCY, *March 29, 1811.*

DEAR SIR, — Your Favour of the 25th is received. I feel much at my Ease under the Lash: as much as Epictetus when he told his Master torturing his Leg, "You will break it," and as much more so as I have no fear of having the Leg broken.

As to your "concern of Mind" I advise you to be very deliberate; and weigh all Things as they will affect yourself, your Family, your Friends, your Country, and Mankind; and then determine as the "Spirit" shall dictate.

The Query whether "Mr. Adams will Answer?" or treat it "with Silent Contempt?" I will not at present Answer. I will say to you in Confidence, I can, when I will harrow up their Souls, by a very simple Tale of Truth.

If J. Q. A. were here, instead of making "The Feathers fly" as you say, I hope he would not foul his Fingers in such dirt.

When a Man who has been thought honest, tho passionate and fiery, begins to be crazy, I have often observed, that one of the first decisive Symptoms of Insanity, is Knavery. How has your Experience been? have you ever remarked the same Thing? I could name several Instances.

Whether Hamilton was a Man "wiser and more



righteous than myself", I shall endeavour to furnish Posterity with the Information necessary to form an impartial and enlightened Judgment, in my own Time and in my own Way, but I will not be unnecessarily diverted from my Course. My pious and virtuous, Sensible and Learned, orthodox and rigid, odd, droll and excentric, Reverend spiritual Guide, Parson Anthony Wibert,<sup>1</sup> who was a great Admirer of Mr. George Whitfield as well as Sandiman<sup>2</sup> and Dr. Hopkins<sup>3</sup> often told me a Story. He once observed to Mr. Whitfield, "How you are vilified and slandered in the Newspapers, and in Pamphlets! I wonder how you can bear it. Does it not affect your Sensibility and make you very unhappy?" Oh No, said Whitfield, if they knew how much pleasure they give me, they would not do it.

I am rejoiced to learn from you, your determination to remove to Boston: because I sincerely believe it will be for your Interest and that of your Family, and I will add a benefit to the Town and Country. I remain your Friend.

<sup>1</sup> Anthony Wibird (1729-1800), pastor of the First Church of Braintree.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Sandeman (1718-1771), founder of the sect of Sandemanians.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel Hopkins (1721-1803), author of Hopkinsonianism, a modification of Calvinism.

[*Endorsement of Waterhouse*] About this time there was not a little abuse in the federal papers, particularly the *Centinel* against Mr. A. senior and junior. The latter was abroad.

QUINCY, *June 11, 1811.*

DEAR SIR, — In your favour of the 9th of this month, you request a Copy of the first page of your Letter to me, “about a month since.” How time flies? Your Month has been three months. You have been so happy that three months have appeared but one. The Copy you desire is as follows :

CAMBRIDGE, *March 12, 1811.*

DEAR SIR, — I here send for your Perusal the Preface to the Botanist. The Publisher has printed off a few dozen by Way of Sample of type, and to give some general Idea of the Work, as well as a short History of its origin. I thought there might be another Service in it, viz., if any thing appeared to egotistical, or too assuming in it, my Friends would probably give me the hint. I mean it as an Introduction to a more positive Claim which I shall make in a future day. I had thoughts of adding in the Work itself those few Lines you see at the End of the Advertisement.

In the Inscription or dedication, I wish to add something like this: “In gratitude for being the first who recommended the Subject of Natural History to his

Countrymen." See Constitution of Massachusetts Section.

The Book will not be out these three months, as the Publisher has just begun to circulate his Subscription. One Reason why I have added the Discourse on Vitality, pronounced before the humane Society is, because you once gave it your Approbation in terms which I Should be glad if it deserved. This was in a Letter from Philadelphia, but I do not recollect the date of it.

The Governor's Speech is a masterly Performance and well timed as well placed. It is time for the National and State Governments to shew that the Laws and Magistrates have some Authority.

I hope and I pray and believe that Mr. Gerry has been and will be one powerful Instrument of saving us from a civil War. I am not, however, as yet under much apprehension and indeed never have been, of such a Calamity. I doubt indeed whether any Man has much apprehension of it, who did not wish it and endeavour to excite it. I am as usual your Friend.

QUINCY, *July 5, 1811.*

DEAR SIR, — The King of modern Babilon, mentioned in your Letter of the 2d, who was become

as a Beast, and whose Kingdom was taken from him, because of the hardness of his heart: is not so beautiful an Animal as the *Taureau blanc* of Voltaire, and it is to be feared will never be restored from his Brutality to his Humanity like him.

The Layman, I think, cannot disguise himself from me, unless he Studies hard to conceal himself. I know him in the *Chronicle* as well as in the *Patriot*.

The Gentleman you mention, I esteem an able Lawyer and a correct judicious Man. I should be glad to see him at any time. An Introduction from you would be received with Pleasure: but he has no need of any Introduction at all. His Name and Face would be Sufficient. Let him not expect any great Things from me, however. My Mind as well as Body have been too long in Use, not to be nearly worn out.

I have not seen Mr. Smith's Writings.<sup>1</sup> Must a President publish a justificatory Proclamation containing all his Reasons, for dismissing a Secretary of State? And when every one of his Reasons is contradicted, misrepresented, abused, insulted, must he answer all these Libells? How

<sup>1</sup> Robert Smith (1757-1842), Secretary of State in Madison's Cabinet, March 6, 1809, to April 1, 1811.

many Clerks and Secretaries must he employ? or must he write all this himself? Twenty Scribes would not be Sufficient. What would become of the Business of the State?

What are the Qualifications of a Secretary of State? He ought to be a Man of universal Reading in Laws, Governments, History. Our whole terrestrial Universe ought to be summarily comprehended in his Mind.

Suppose a President has a Secretary, fastened upon him by a Predecessor, whom he finds incompetent to the high Duties of his office, and thinks it necessary to dismiss him for his Incapacity; or suppose he knows another, infinitely better qualified: must he reveal the whole History of his Administration, and detail every Fact upon which he grounded his opinion? Every Fact will be denied, every Inference disputed. How long must this Controversy continue. It will be a Subject of dispute with Posterity as well as the present Age.

When I had written thus far, Mr. Smith's *Address to the People of the United States* was brought to me from the Post Office. Mr. Pickering's Address is to be continued. When I get all these Addresses before me I shall have the Pleasure

to know, that if I have not a Capacity, I shall be under no Obligation, "*tantas componere lites.*" With great regard, etc.

FROM BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE

CAMBRIDGE, July 8, 1811.

DEAR SIR, — I received your letter of the 5th with pleasure and read it with satisfaction, as I always do, because I understand your politics, and because I see in them one uniform and everlasting principle that does not bend to the fashions and caprices of the day. Foolish people have cried out, "Mr. Adams has changed his politics; he is no longer a federalist, but is changed to a republican." I have as constantly replied, that I know of no man in the country who has changed less.

I am glad that you are perusing the writings of Mr. Smith, and I wish the public could be instructed by your opinion of them. As to Mr. Pickering's publications, they cease to be interesting to any one, even of his own party. Since they appeared, I conversed with Mr. S. Dexter respecting the conduct of Pickering. He condemns him altogether. He said that the President ought to have dismissed him for intriguing with the senators against him; and he supposed that you



had beside other reasons. He then related to me your efforts to give this resentful man a comfortable living in the station of a Judge, but that it was concluded by others that the Colonel was not quite adequate to the station of a Judge. Dexter spoke with indignation of the conduct of P. towards you. This able lawyer has such a bright streak of Republicanism in his character, that he is no great favorite with the Junto. These people are more gratified with this publication of Smith's, than with the numbers of the Colonel, which last have struggled through their newspapers with great difficulty. The party was ashamed of his taking up the cudgels in favour of the *Little-Belt*.

What I long to see, above all things is an exposition of what I call the *Hamiltonian conspiracy*. Whether I am perfectly correct I know not; but my general idea is this. The British party, or Tories, have long contemplated a separation of the States, and a formation of a *Northern confederacy*, the end and aim of which was [is] to be opposition to France and to the Southern States, and a sort of alliance with England. Old England was to hold one end of the *golden chain* of commerce, and New England the other, while the Devil and Bonaparte were to take our Southern brethren. Fisher

Ames gave a toast in a certain assemblage several years ago indicating Hamilton as the military leader of this Kingdom of the North. His sentiment was to this effect: Alex'r H—— may we not speedily want his great military and political talents, but when we do, *may we have them*. When Burr shot Hamilton, it was not Brutus killing Caesar in the Senate-house; but it was killing him before he passed the Rubicon. Hence the anguish, the deep anguish of Geo. C [abo] t and company at their Caesar's death. Whether his plan of 50,000 foot and 10,000 horse was not a part of the scheme is a question I am not able to answer; but certain I am that their extreme disappointment at his death, which amounted to an agony could not have arisen from a mere personal feeling, nor for the loss of his financiering talents. This intriguing West Indian saw in the same city one man who watched his motions, and who was capable of counteracting his plans, and the designs of his party; and this man he tried to destroy by the poisoned arrows of calumny, but (providentially for us) was destroyed himself; and with him fell, for that time, the hopes of the *Northern confederacy*. Hence we may account for his bust staring us in the face in the entries of some of our professors

and clergymen! Washington himself is not spoken of in such terms of deep regret as is this New York lawyer! and your animadversions upon him in your printed correspondence created more disagreeable sensations than if you had spoken as much against Washington. How is all this to be accounted for, if it were not for the loss of their contemplated military leader? Two years ago, when they brought forth their famous resolutions in the Legislature, and when Gore talked so boldly of warring with France, Hamilton's death was again a melancholly subject of deep lamentation among the leaders of the party, and the separation of the States and a *Northern confederacy* was again alluded to, in private circles and "assemblages." They then began again "*to speak daggers*;" and it was observed that they brought forward and caressed General Brooks, of this neighbourhood, and toasted him at a dinner they have in honor of the Spanish Patriots; but they found that the General had grown old very fast, and was spiritless, so that we have heard no more of him at their solemn feasts. All these things, and a hundred other little things, such as half uttered wishes and sentences convince me that the party have been looking anxiously around for a military man as

near like unto Alex'r Hamilton as possible, but they can find none. They can raise their eyes to nothing higher in Massachusetts than Capt'n I—— and Capt'n D——l S——r——t! Men "*full of sound and fury.*" Some of them have avowed that they looked to H. as the saviour of the country; but that now, there may be a dozen as good as he, but alas! there is not one, with his reputation! So that unless they invite back and forgive Aaron Burr, the South and the North will not be divided immediately.

Now Sir, have I been dreaming, or writing romance, or true history, collected from their own words and actions? I am firmly of opinion that there are in —— two or three hundred of the assemblage on the verge of bankruptcy,<sup>1</sup> and who would enlist under Cataline, had Cataline the confidence to beat up for volunteers. I suspect that the Governor has a similar idea, and I guess that the President and he view objects through the same glass, and in the same light; but am doubtful if the council ever had a peep through it. Walsh has taken up the odious business of Ames,

<sup>1</sup> all the Boston seat; the whole foederal force was exerted to pass an accomodating bankrupt act, which was postponed to the next winter. — Note by Waterhouse.

that of rendering us contemptible in our own eyes, and of magnifying and glorifying modern Babylon the city of the *Great King*, while most of the clergy are like the ancient Augurs uttering to the people just what their masters dictate, and several of these in Boston and its vicinity will groop in the guts of beast for hire. Now unless I am, like J. L [owell], politically mad, I can trace all these things up to the Hamiltonian conspiracy that destroyed the foederal administration. If these things be truths ought they not to be told to the people, instead of amusing them with the Berlin and Milan decrees, and orders of council? Ought not the people of this State to be told that their Chief J [ustice] <sup>1</sup> is in league against their liberties, against their constitution? And ought they not to be told that a war with England is the only remedy against the evil, and against a greater one, a war among ourselves? Thus has the spirit moved me; and if I do not seal it up, and send it off to the post-house, I shall do with it as I hope you will, burn it.

Yours as ever,

B. WATERHOUSE.

<sup>1</sup> Theophilus Parsons.

FROM JOHN ADAMS

QUINCY, July 12, 1811.

DEAR SIR, — The Charge of "Change of Politicks" hinted in your Letter of the 8th deserves no other Answer than this, "*The Hyperfederalists are become Jacobins, and The Hyperrepublicans are become Federalists.*" John Adams remains *Semper idem*, both Federalist and Republican in every rational and intelligible Sense of both those Words.

What shall I say of Mr. Dexter? *Rara Avis in Terris nigroque Similima Cygno!* You see I have not forgotten my Lilly's Grammar. I wish he was more acquainted with the Governor: and the Governor with him. He is destined, if his Country has common Sense, and he is not too happy in his Family, to be a very important Character in our Drama, before, at, or after the great Denuement: if that should happen in his Day. If he were pitted against Otis, who must hide his diminished head?

Of Pickering and Smith I have nothing to say at present: but this: a Secretary of State ought to have pierced into the remotest Periods of ancient Times and into the most distant Regions of the Earth: He should have studied the Map of Man, in his savage as well as civilised State. It is more



necessary that a Secretary of State should be omniscient, than a President, provided the President be honest and judicious. Where can we find such Men? either for Presidents or Secretaries?

If there ever was an "Hamiltonian Conspiracy" as you call it; and as you seem to suppose: I have reason to think its object was not "a Northern Confederation." Hamilton's Ambition was too large for so small an Aim. He aimed at commanding the whole Union, and He did not like to be shackled even with an Alliance with G. Britain. I know that Pickering was disappointed in not finding Hamilton zealous for an Alliance with England, when we were at sword Points with France: and I have information, which I believe, but could not legally prove perhaps, that Pickering was mortified to find that neither Hamilton nor King would adopt the Plan that he carried from Boston, in his Way to Congress after he was first chosen into the Senate, of a division of the States and a Northern Confederacy. No! H[amilton] had wider Views! If he could have made a Tool of Adams as he did of Washington, he hoped to erect such a Government as he pleased over the whole Union, and enter into Alliance with France or England as would suit his Convenience.

H [amilton] and Burr, in point of Ambition were equal. In Principle equal. In Talents different. H [amilton] superior in Litterary Talents: B [urr], in military. H [amilton], a Nevis Adventurer, B [urr] descended from the earliest, most learned, pious, and virtuous of our American Nation, and buoyed up by Prejudices of half the Nation. He found himself thwarted, persecuted, caluminated by a wandering Stranger. The deep Malice of H [amilton] against Burr, and his indefatigable Exertions to defame him are little known. I knew so much of it for a Course of Years, that I wondered a Duel had not taken Place seven Years before it did. I could have produced such a Duel at any Moment for seven Years. I kept the Secrets sacred and inviolable: and have kept them to this day.

What shall I say of Walsh?<sup>1</sup> His History, Character, and Connections are not sufficiently known. Popish Jesuits, French Loyalists, Scottish Reviewers, are his closest Friends. I wish our Countrymen would not run after such Meteors without enquiring into their natural History. Genius, Talents, Learning in Such Hands!

I can no more.

<sup>1</sup> Robert Walsh (1784-1859) began to publish in 1811 *The American Review of History and Politics*.

QUINCY, *Sept'r* 15, 1811.

DEAR WATERHOUSE, — I receive no Letters with so much pleasure as yours and Rush's. The shortest of them always contains something new and solid ; something witty and a good deal that is humorous.

How many more hot Nutts for the Monkeys you will see, I know not.

They will lie, and laugh and joke : but they will not make much Noise, because that might provoke some of their own Party to peep at the *Patriot* which they studiously keep out of Sight.

Bowdoin would have been a Republican, if he had lived to these Times ; and so would Washington, since Hamilton is dead.

I rejoice in the Governor's Spirits. He will come out of the Furnace double refined.

Your Son <sup>1</sup> was as much admired as any of the Performers, not only by my Daughter, Niece and three Grand daughters, but by all I have heard speak of Commencement.

I know of but one Copy of The "History of Disputes with America" <sup>2</sup> which I want to have

<sup>1</sup> John Fothergill Waterhouse (1791-1817).

<sup>2</sup> *The Origin of the American Contest with Great Britain*, the title under which the letters of "Massachusettensis," David Leonard, were printed in 1774. John Adams replied, under the name of "Novanglus."

printed in a new Edition. If I send it you must return it soon.

Philo Sallust is a Conjuror. What Pythoness of Ender he has called up to inform him of Old Stories I cannot conceive. Yours always

QUINCY, *December 3, 1811.*

A Visit from you, my good Friend, would be a cordial, and if honoured by His Honour <sup>1</sup> would raise my Spirits as high as they are capable of rising: but the demands of his time and attention, from private and public Affairs are constantly so urgent, that I wonder not at your disappointments.

I am able to give you little or no Satisfaction, in answer to your Inquiries.

I know of no Authority given in Scripture to the Priesthood to order National Fasts or Thanksgivings. The Pope in Countries that acknowledge his infallibility may order what he will. Bishops write Pastoral Letters to their Dioceses. The General Assemblies of Presbyterian Churches in Scotland and America, and Synods and Councils recommend Fasts and Thanksgivings. In France and in Russia *Te Deum* is ordered to be Sung for Victories, for the Birth of Princes, etc., I suppose

<sup>1</sup> Governor Gerry.

by the Emperors and Kings. In England, Since the Reformation, Kings have appointed National Fasts and Thanksgivings, by Proclamation and have sometimes ordered Forms of Prayer to be prepared, sometimes by the Convocation and sometimes by the Archbishop of Canterbury. I remember no Fast or Thanksgiving in Holland. Of Switzerland I know nothing.

In New England the Governors have from the first Settlement of the Country appointed Fasts and Thanksgivings annually and occasionally by Proclamation.<sup>1</sup> But they have no legal binding Force. They are no more than respectable Recommendations. They have been observed as punctually in general as the Sabbath.

The Old Congress appointed Continental Fasts. Washington appointed a Thanksgiving and Adams a Fast: but they were not observed by some as they ought have been.

I believe the House of Representatives in 1774 recommended a Fast and it was as Sacredly obs[erved] as any Sunday I ever knew. Returning from the [North] Circuit I rode all that day, through a Country, as still as Midnight. No Labour or Recreation.

<sup>1</sup> See Love, *Fast and Thanksgiving Days of New England*.

There is no legal Authority civil or ecclesiastical in America for enjoining and compelling obedience to any Appointment or Recommendation of Fasts or Thanksgivings.

The Baptists and Quakers, and all other Sects, but the Presbyterians and Congregationalists have clamoured against our National Fasts for reasons which you may conjecture. Probably from a Jealousy of the two latter, and an Apprehension that they may become ambitious and Aim at a Superiority or Establishment. I verily believe they had rather have a Man of no Religion for a President than a Man of any; at least than a Presbyterian or Congregationalist.

I have read "Philo" and "Remarks" and knew by the Style, *Aut Erasmi*, etc.

My only Wonder has been how the [blank] he got his Knowledge.

My documents as you call them, ought not to prevent the immediate Publication of any Information more immediately useful for the Public to know.

I wonder that you and the Publick are not outrageous with impatience at seeing so much of my insipid Stuff, so long out of date; I can hardly persuade myself to believe that you have read a



tenth part of it. I must not wholly exhaust the Patience of the Readers.

I am glad you are fixed in Boston. Alas! I have not been in that grand and beautiful City these four Months.

Weep with me, over the Tomb of my Brother and Sister Cranch <sup>1</sup> in whom I have lost one of the greatest Comforts of my Life. I visited their habitation almost every day; and there I was always happy. I am Sir your constant Friend.

QUINCY, *Dec'r* 12, 1811.

DEAR SIR, — What is common Law in England has been Subject to disputes enough. In Blackstone's Commentaries and Fortescue Aland's Preface <sup>2</sup> to his Reports you may find the most intelligible Account. In general, Usage from time immemorial practiced and approved, is the Criterion.

It is denied by many and doubted by more whether the United States have any common Law.

<sup>1</sup> Richard Cranch, born in 1726, married Mary Smith, sister of Abigail Smith Adams. The judge died October 16, 1811, and his wife on the following day.

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Fortescue Aland (1670-1746), author of *Reports of Select Cases in all the Courts of Westminster Hall* [1695-1738], published in 1748.

There may be some Principles and Rules of Law which are common to all the seperate States.

And there is no single State, but has some Rules which are undoubtedly common Law. But you will not expect me to enter these boundless Fields of Controversy, and discussion.

I have heard it said in ancient days, that any Servile Labour or indecent Recreation on a Fast or Thanksgiving day, which should give Scandal to the People would be indictable and punishable. On the Contrary I have heard that there is no difference between those days and any Week days of the year. Before I went to College and while I was there, I knew a Gentleman, a Colonel Gooch,<sup>1</sup> first of Boston, then of Braintree, and last of all of Milton, a curious Character, educated at the Temple in England and admitted a Barrister there, as adroit at Intrigue as any before or Since. He would make a Figure in an ecclesiastical History of this Country. I have heard him boast the Superiority of his own Wit in carting in his own hay upon a Fast Day in the face of all the People going to Church and laugh at all his Neighbours who had theirs spoiled by a Torrent of rain by

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Gooch (1728-1811). There is an account of "this curious individual" in Pattee, *History of Old Braintree*, p. 369.

leaving it out. He said that Proclamations were not Laws.

If you look into the Constitution of the Massachusetts you will find a Chapter on the University at Cambridge, in which the Priviledges of that Seminary are established.

Mr. Cranch's Countenance resembled the Pictures of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus as much or more than that of Mr. Locke.

You say, for my Consolation, that I have many Friends; Col. Pickering says I have but few. When Doctors disagree who shall decide. *C'est moi.* Yes! I have many Friends among the best and greatest People in all the States. Friends, not acquired by Faction or Intrigue or any selfish Consideration, but founded on the purest Principles of public and private Virtue.

Yes, I have a Wife and Sons, and a Daughter and Grand Children, God bless them. They are the Comforts and Supports of my Life.

I also have read the Sermon of Dr. Lathrop,<sup>1</sup> whom I have loved and esteemed from 1768.

Though I may not agree with my Friend in all his Sentiments, yet, as he has as clear a Right to

<sup>1</sup> John Lathrop (1740-1816), *Peace and War in relation to the United States of America*, a discourse on November 21, 1811 — day of Thanksgiving.

his own Opinions as I have to mine, I have no right to censure them, since he has delivered them with Decorum. He has not preached Breisted<sup>1</sup> and Walsh, and licentious Newspapers.

Two or three of our Clergy have given pretty good Proofs, that if they had power they would make tolerable Archbishop Lauds or Cardinal Lorrains. Several others have furnished Evidence that they might become excellent Sacheverels. I hope they will all learn more Wisdom and Moderation. The Governor has given them a dignified Memento. I will not call it an Admonition.

I am glad to hear of your Lectures and hope your Prospects in Boston are agreeable. Yours as ever.

QUINCY, *March 11, 1812.*

DEAR SIR, — The tumultuous Crowd of Thoughts that rushed into my head as I read your Letter of Yesterday, would appear as gross a Chaos and as wild an Anarchy, if it could be described in Writing; as the Politicks of our Commonwealth appear to you, as described in your Letter. If I

<sup>1</sup> John Bristed (1778–1855), an Englishman, who came to the United States and edited the *Monthly Magazine*. He is best known for his *Resources of the British Empire*, 1811.

hint at some of them, I shall study no Tacticks to marshall them in order.

1. In the first place, I absolutely forbid that this letter or any part of it, should be published *in my name*: because instead of promoting Mr. Gerry's Election, it would alienate from him, thousands of Votes. The least Appearance of forwardness *in me*, to dictate or Advise, would be imputed to selfish Motives, and produce a Reaction.

2. In the second place, I hope your doubt of the Election of Mr. Gerry, is unfounded; I see no reason why a single Man, who voted for Mr. Gerry last year, should not vote for him, this. On the contrary I see many more, and much stronger Reasons, for voting for him this year than last.

3. In the third place. Not only "a slight Speck," but a black Cloud of War, with England hangs over us. If such a War, or any War should take place; Mr. Gerry is infinitely better fitted, to conduct this Commonwealth, through it, than Mr. Strong. I have known Mr. Gerry very nearly forty Years: and I know him to possess a Sagacity, a Fortitude, an inflexibility, and an indefatigable Application which few Men can equal. Indeed I know of none in the State. These are Virtues,

Talents, and qualities, which at this time are peculiarly requisite, and indispensable.

4. In the fourth place. the Party which supports Mr. Strong, love Great Britain, and hate France. Mr. Gerry hates neither. Nor loves either, with more than general Benevolence to all Nations. To throw the Government of the Commonwealth into the hands of a Party, devoted to Great Britain, at a time when we are in immediate danger of a War with that Empire, would be downright Absurdity.

5. In the fifth place. You want my Opinion of “modern Politicks generally” and “Governor Gerry’s Politicks” in particular. My Stars! to write these Opinions would require a Volume as large as Willard’s *Body of Divinity*! But what signify the Opinions of an Individual? or a State? We must in such times as these cling to the *National Government*, as our only Rock of Safety against the Storm: and endeavour to conform our *State Governments* to the *general Government* as much as we can. There were many Things in Washington’s Administration, in my own, and in Jefferson’s, which I could not approve. I wished they were otherwise. But I could not prevent them nor alter them. I had no Choice but to submit.



If I had a vote I should give it to Mr. Madison at the next Election; because I know of no Man who would do better. At present the general Government are approaching nearer and nearer to my System. They are restoring the Taxes that ought never to have been repealed. They are doing Something by Sea. Why do not the Republicans and Federalists too, cry aloud for a Navy? That is the only Arm that can protect us, or preserve the Union. This Object I have pursued with unabated Zeal for six and thirty years. Why do we not celebrate the American Navy of 1775. 76. 77. 78. 79. 1780, etc. Why are not held up to Admiration the Tryumphs of Talbot, Truxtun, Little, Preble and the two Decatur? No! Toryism abhors all these Exploits, and Whigs have not Sense nor Spirit to see the Necessity of it; or to undertake the Work. The landed Interest in Holland depressed their Navy. The landed Interest in France always starved theirs. And we see the Consequences. The landed Interest in America has done the same, and we feel the Effects.

6. In the sixth place. The Necessity of a *Union of Sentiment, and Affection between the National and State Governments*, at this important

Juncture, the danger of being influenced by Men, who threaten to resist the laws, and destroy the Fabric of the Union, is so obvious and palpable, that the Man who wants the Opinion of John Adams to convince him of it, must be destitute of common Information, or common Understanding.

7. In the seventh place. I have been absent from this Commonwealth from 1775 to 1778 in Congress; *four years*; from 1778 to 1788, in Europe, *ten years*; from 1789 to 1801, as Vice President, and President, *twelve years*, and *eleven years* in a Hermitage in Quincy, *Thirty Seven years*. In all this time I have had no Opportunities to mix with the People of this State; or to know much of Men or Things in it. How then is it possible, or how can it be decent for me to come forward and preach and exhort upon the Politicks of the State? I have had Opportunities to know Something of the general Affairs of the Union, and of the foreign Relations of the Nation. I have learned to respect the Rights of Kentucky, Tennessee and Ohio, as much as those of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, or New Hampshire. I cannot enter into local Feelings, low Intrigues, or party Flickerings.

8. In the eighth place, I have voted for Mr.

Gerry; and will vote for him this year; and most ardently hope he will be chosen; because I believe him to be incomparably the most independent, disinterested, and capable Man for the office that now breaths the Air of Massachusetts.

9. In the ninth place. *Massachusetts is her own worst Enemy.* As soon as a Man has done great Services, made great Sacrifices, and acquired a Name, Envy runs him down; Hancock, Adams, Gerry, Warren, James Otis, are with them interested Men. Washington and Franklin, with their half a Million of dollars a piece, are disinterested Ones. Hamilton is the Idol, and his Worshipers, Ames, Otis, etc., are the Saints. The Tories have done this; and they must be humbled, as they are in New York, and Pennsylvania; or Woe! Woe! Woe to Jerusalem! How opposite is the Policy of Virginia! Washington, Jefferson, Madison, P. Henry, Monroe, Marshall, and even John Randolph, steadily supported, and cryed up to the Stars!

10. In the tenth place. I regret the Necessity Mr. Gerry has been under to remove so many officers. The predominant Party have pushed him too hard, and grasped at too much. Mr. Gerry has done the best in his Power. I know by long

Experience that a Governor checked by a Council, and a President checked by a Senate, in Appointments to executive offices, cannot always do what he thinks is wisest and best.

The Federalists by their own Selfishness, Exclusion, and Intolerance, have provoked and deserved the Retaliation: yet I cannot but wish that both Parties, when in Power, would be more generous and liberal.

Mr. Gerry's Philosophy will support him whatever may be the Event.

I have said Nothing of Banks, a System of Injustice from the foundation: but it is now hard to say which Party has been most culpable. I am as ever your Friend.

QUINCY, *August 16, 1812.*

DEAR WATERHOUSE, — You are so waggish and roguish with your Woofs and your Warps and your Webs, that I am almost afraid to write or speak to you. Yet I wish we were nearer together.

I was a little alarmed at the Story of the pacific Commission. Some body was pleased to call the Sarcasms in the *Repertory*, "Severe." They ought to have been called the Snarlings of Park the Puppy, and the Squealings of Park the Pigg.

It is become fashionable to call me "The Venerable." It makes me think of the venerable Bede, the venerable Mead, the venerable Daniel Burgess, the venerable Savannarola, the venerable Westley,<sup>1</sup> the venerable Theodore Beza. The Gentlemen of the Navy Yard at Washington have lately called me the modern Nestor. I like that Title much better. Pray change the Title and say the venerable Washington the venerable Jefferson, and the venerable Madison: I have worn it too long. It is become threadbare upon me. Do not however, I pray you call me the "Godlike Adams," "the Sainted Adams," "our Saviour Adams," "Our Redeemer Adams," "our Saviour on Earth and our Advocate in Heaven," "The Father of his Country," "The Founder of the American Republic," "The Founder of the American Empire," etc., etc., etc. These Ascriptions belong to no Man; no! nor to any twenty Men; nor to any hundred Men, nor to any thousand Men.

I am every day more and more surprized at the Ignorance of my Countrymen of European

<sup>1</sup> The references are not clear. He probably had in mind Richard Mead (1673-1754), a physician of Stepney, Daniel Burgess (1645-1713), a Presbyterian minister, and John Wesley (1703-1791) or Charles Wesley (1707-1788).

History. In 1755 the History of Lewis 14th was familiar. Bona[parte] has done no more than he did. Swift, Bolingbroke, etc., treat with contempt and Ridicule the Imputations of Ambition for universal Monarchy which were made against him by English, Dutch, and Austrian Politicians.

The Agent of Louis 14 was Mesnager.<sup>1</sup> His Name and Intrigues are mentioned in the Report of the Secret Committee of Parliament appointed to enquire into the Conduct of Queen Ann's Ministry after the Peace of Utrecht. He afterwards published an Account of his Mission and his Measures. Dr. Cooper, I believe had one of them. Whether any Library in Boston or Cambridge now contains it I know not.

Smollett's History gives the War of 1709. 10. 11. 12, and the Exertions of England Holland and Austria in Alliance, to place the grand Duke Charles on the Throne of Spain, in opposition to the King of France who insisted upon placing the Duke of Anjou there and finally prevailed. The Earl of Peterborough and the Earl of Galway commanded the British Forces. Have you never read of the Earl of Peterborough's saying: "Man might run about Spain to all Eternity with an Army at

<sup>1</sup> Nicolas le Baillif, known as Le Mesnager (1658-1714).



his heels, and drive all before him. Yet be never the nearer being Master of the Country?"

About three hundred thousand Lives and incalculable Treasurer were expended in that Question of Succession. The Allies lost all. France prevailed, and will again. An hundred thousand Monks may be killed in Arms or hanged for taking Arms, as there were then. But France will prevail to secure the Alliance of Spain as she did then. If Napoleon dies tomorrow it will make no Odds. Spain is safer in Alliance with France than with England and the real Nation knows it.

I Should like to see Belsham's History of Queen Ann's War, especially in Spain: but I have it not. Adieu.

QUINCY, *August 19, 1812.*

DEAR SIR, — The History of Queen Ann's reign and of the Treaty of Utrecht is so instructive, that it is worth while to look into the Life of Mesnager, and into that of the Abby Gauthia.<sup>1</sup>

Mesnager was a Merchant of Rouen; in great Commerce, but preferring Politicks to trade. Louis 14th informed of his Talents, sent him twice

<sup>1</sup> François Gauthier (d. 1720), named "Abbé d'Olivet et de Savigny" for his share in the Treaty of Utrecht.

into Spain, to regulate the commerce of the Indias ; and afterwards into Holland to confer with Heinsius,<sup>1</sup> grand Pensionary of the States. The King was so well pleased with his Conduct and Success that he made him a Knight and an Earl. Queen Ann, previously disposed to Peace by Gauthier, demanded a Person vested with full Powers to agree upon Preliminaries. Mesnager entrusted with this negotiation, went Incognito to London, and signed on the 8th Oct., 1711, the Articles which were the Basis of the Peace of Utrecht. This unexpected Success, augmented the Confidence of Louis so that he appointed this sly Fellow his Minister Plenipotentiary, with Uxells,<sup>2</sup> and Polignac,<sup>3</sup> to the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.

Gauthier was a Man of great Sense, and born for a Politician. Living in England some years, upon his private Affairs, he acquired the language and Acquaintance of some of the Courtiers. England was then weary of the long and ruinous War, which with her Allies, Austria and Holland, she sustained chiefly at her own Expence against France for the Succession of the Crown of Spain.

<sup>1</sup> Anthony Heinsius (1640–1720).

<sup>2</sup> Nicolas du Blé, Marquis d'Uxelles (1652–1730).

<sup>3</sup> Melchior de Polignac (1661–1742).

He obtained secret Conferences with the Queen; went to France, obtained secret Powers from Louis; returned to England; treated secretly with the Ministers, and prepared the way for the Conferences at Utrecht. He was not treated like Henry.<sup>1</sup> He had no reason to complain that he was not rewarded. He received two Abbeys in France. The King of Spain gave him a Pension of twelve thousand Livres; Queen Ann another Pension of Six thousand and a compleat Service of silver Plate.

Mesnager followed him, as I suppose, and played off the Machinery which he afterwards published in print. Gauthier had not prepared the Nation, nor removed all the Scruples of the Queen and her Ministers. Mesnager compleated what Gauthier began: but so much of these Intrigues was discovered after the Peace, that Marlborough, Eugène, the Dutch, and the Austrians, came very near taking off the heads of Harley and Bolingbroke.

So perilous an Adventure it is to make peace. Some hardy Adventurer or other within a few years must be employed to make peace for Us. Whoever he may be he will deserve Pity. I will

<sup>1</sup> Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (1678-1751).

not Say Woe to his head ; but Woe to his Reputation and his Feelings and his Fortune, if he is not a Franklin. He can have no Abbeyes, no Pensions, no Earldoms, no Services of plate. Nothing but eternal, coldness, Obloquy, Jealousy, hatred, and contempt. Whatever Peace he may make, good, bad, or indifferent, it will make no Odds. You will live to see it. Mark my Words ; Scorn, Reproach, Villification, and hissing, will be his Portion, if not thumps and kicks, by the most violent Friends of Order, Law and government. It must be so : for all Parties have been violent Friends of Order, Law, Government, and Religion, when in Power ; and all Parties libellous, Seditious, and rebellious, when out of Power. Such is our destiny and if all Parties will not and cannot be united in Support of Law, order Government and Religion : We must go the Way of all the Earth. Adieu.

QUINCY, *September 15, 1812.*

DEAR SIR, — You ask my Opinion, (if I understand you) whether Duane <sup>1</sup> or General Hull,<sup>2</sup> be

<sup>1</sup> William Duane (1760–1835), editor of the Philadelphia *Aurora*, was appointed adjutant general in 1813 and served through the war.

<sup>2</sup> William Hull (1753–1825), who had been compelled to surrender Detroit to the British on August 16, 1812. Apparently the news of that event had not reached Adams or Waterhouse.

the fittest Man for Secretary of War. I answer, In my Opinion, Wilkinson <sup>1</sup> was fitter than either. But his Vanity and the Collision of Faction have rendered his Appointment improper and impossible.

Again, if you wish my Opinion, you shall have it. I know that Colonel William Stevens Smith of Lebanon,<sup>2</sup> in Smiths Valley on Chenango River in the State of New York, was and is fitter for the Command of the Northwestern Army, and fitter for Secretary at War, than Eustis,<sup>3</sup> Wilkinson, or Hull, or Dearborn. But his Pride, his Marriage with my Daughter, and the Collisions of Factions have rendered his Appointment improper and impossible.

I have never had my Copies of the *Botanist*. My Son lent me his to read. I wish to have mine neatly bound.

The Booksellers in Boston and Salem, who refused to take any of them, disliked the Dedicator as well as the Dedicatee. You must know by this time, that the Tories in Massachusetts, Rhode

<sup>1</sup> James Wilkinson (1757-1825), whose career offers one of the problems in our history.

<sup>2</sup> Adams's son-in-law.

<sup>3</sup> William Eustis (1753-1825), Secretary of War from March 7, 1809, to December 31, 1812.

Island and Connecticut have all Reputations in their Powers; yours, mine, my Son's and Son-in-Law's. And Washington's too. If a freak should take them, they could hunt down into Contem[pt] the Character of Washington, which they have been twelve Years exalting above all that is called God and that is worshipped.

You must know that poor Rush and you, and I, and all our Posterity are in the Power of the Tories. I mean the British Faction, whose Justice is Machiavellianism and whose tender Mercies are Cruelty, and whose Gratitude is Treachery and Perfidy. I am, as ever your Friend.

QUINCY, *Jan.* 16, 1813.

DEAR SIR,

I am broke. . . . I am a Bankrupt.

Je n'ai rien; Je dois partout,

Dans mes Affaires je suis au but.

My Table is loaded with long, learned and ingenious Letters, from far and near, upon Religion, Law, Government, History, Politicks, and War, which I have not answered, and cannot answer. I will however not fail to acknowledge my debts to you both pecuniary and literary; and trust to the Clemency of my other Creditors.



That ever such a frivolous circumstance as the discontinuance of a Newspaper by a Man who does not read half he receives, Should make a Noise! Have the Wise Men of Boston nothing of more importance to meditate?

The other Rumour is of more consequence. Some Judges know too little and some too much. "When a great learned Man dies," says Lord Coke, "much good learning dies with him."

When, the Man who is said to have annihilated Bar and Jury dies,<sup>1</sup> much Science and literature, some useful and much useless will die with him: and at the same time, much crooked Policy will expire. Have you read Rush, on the diseases of of the Mind?<sup>2</sup> I know not whether he has enumerated all the Distempers of the Intellect. There is one which is born with some Souls, and will never leave them till they leave the Body; perhaps not then. This Malady or rather this Ailment is vulgarly yclept, left handed Wisdom and sometimes crooked Wisdom.

I was so much pleased at Mr. Gray's, that I was very much displeased to be called away: and had

<sup>1</sup> Waterhouse has noted in the margin "Theophilus Parsons."

<sup>2</sup> *Medical Inquiries and Observations upon Diseases of the Mind*, 1812.

I not engaged to bring a worthy old Gentleman and Lady to Quincy I would gladly have Sat till Eight O'Clock and then come home by Moonlight.

Are you acquainted with our medical Arrangements? and do you approve them? *Sub rosa*; Rush writes me that "The Medical department of our Army and Navy requires Amendment. It is a faithful and absurd Copy of what it was under the Administration of Dr. Shippen."<sup>1</sup> Do you know the Purveyors to our military Hospitals?

I very much fear, that the Changes in the War and Navy departments are not much for the better. Armstrong<sup>2</sup> has the Advantage of a military Reputation: but is it not doubtful, whether he has that patient and laborious Application to Business and Study which that Office requires. I have heard that his Sight is defective. He ought to be able to read, night and day. J[ones] has no fame, that I have ever heard. His qualifications I shall presume, to be good till the contrary appears. His Talents should be the brightest and his qualities the most active and nervous.

<sup>1</sup> William Shippen, Jr. (1736-1808), Director-General of the Military Hospitals, 1777, but resigned in 1781 on charges of maladministration, which were not proven.

<sup>2</sup> Armstrong was made Secretary of War January 13, 1813, taking office February 5. William Jones became Secretary of the Navy January 12, 1813.

Rush is so near my heart, that I must return to his very interesting Volume. It seems to me, that every excess of Passion, Prejudice, Appetite; of Love, Fear, Jealousy, Envy, Revenge, Avarice, Ambition; every Revery and Vagary of Imagination, the Fairy Tales, the Arabian Nights, in short, almost all Poetry and all Oratory; every écart, every deviation from pure, logical mathematical Reason; may in Some Sense be called a disease of the mind.

Your Enemies, are in their hearts Rush's Enemies and for the same Reasons, medical and political. But you are both too fluent with your Pens. They dare not attack you openly. They dare not meet you in the Field. They have recourse to their Sappers and Miners.

But for this Cowardice you would soon see Rush's Treatise attacked from all quarters, as Refinement, Vision, Whim.

I know not two Characters more alike than Rush's and yours. I know not two more ingenious Men; nor too better informed Men; nor two better Men. Yet you see the Fortunes of both. The Kingdom of Virtue is not of this World. No; nor the Kingdom of Science; nor the Kingdom of Merit.

I say nothing of myself. My singular Situation exposes me to Expences that I cannot support. But if there is any Way in which I can serve you, consistently, you may command. your Friend.

QUINCY, *March* 16, 1813.

DEAR SIR, — I have just rec'd your Favour of Yesterday. It has been a Rule of the Government from 1789 to this day to answer no Solicitations or Recommendations for Office. The necessity of this Rule must be obvious to every enquiring Mind.

The Hyperfederalists, or the Ultrafederalists, have a more exalted System, than the simple Federalists. They dare not openly and publickly avow or attempt to Support their Theory or their underhand practice. If they had the Courage, you would hear them declare, and you would read in their Writings their Wishes that every one of our Frigates had been taken burnt or sunk, and every one of our naval Conquerors kill'd or carried Prisoners to British Dungeons. They are not only no Friends, but they are in their Hearts rancorous Enemies to an American Navy. Their *Summum bonum* is a War with France, an Alliance

with England, and a dependence on the British Navy for the protection of their Commerce. In opposition to their System and to all their diabolical Intrigues, I hardly pursued my own System in 1799 and 1800, made Peace with France at the expence of all my consequence in the World, and their unanimous and immortal hatred. France is the natural Ally of U. S. if we must have any Ally. We ought not to war with her, but in the last Necessity. This is no new Opinion. I express'd it and gave my Reasons for it at large in Congress in 1775. The French Government have had it under my hand, among their Archives more than thirty years. And the American Public has had it in print in my *Discourses on Davila* twenty-two or twenty-three years. I have never varied, one moment from this opinion, nor departed from this Principle in practice for thirty-seven years.

I have not seen Mellish's Travels. The western Country is indeed a vast World. Philadelphia thinks itself the Centre. New York thinks itself the Centre, and Boston thinks itself the Centre. Beccaria says, Every Man thinks himself the Centre of the whole Univers. Who, then, is the most diseased Mind?

From your Letter I conclude that Eustis will

draw the Prize. Is there any Thing nearer your home that would suit you?

In one of your Letters you express'd a Wish to see my History of the rise and progress of the disputes between G. B. and America written in 1774 and 1775. If that inclination continues, I will lend it to you. But as I have no other Copy, you must return it unhurt.

Mr. Varnum promised me, that he would try to have Something done for you. I am as ever.

QUINCY, *March 23, 1813.*

DEAR SIR, — The inclosed letter from Dr. Rush will give you good News of your Son. I congratulate you on the honor he has obtained by his Examination, and his Sure prospect of a Degree as a Doctor of Medicine.

A young Gentleman came from Boston before Breakfast this morning, on purpose to bring me the News of the *Hornet's* Laurels.<sup>1</sup> I wish every young Man had as good Feelings and as much respect for mine. But Alas, how many have Sensations and Reflections of a different Character! I congratulate you, that Lawrence is now enrolled

<sup>1</sup> The *Hornet*, Commander James Lawrence, won a victory over the *Peacock*, Captain William Peake, February 24, 1813, off the mouth of the Demerara River.



in the List of our naval Conquerors with Hull, Decatur, Jones, and Bainbridge. Immortality here and hereafter be their Reward. And something besides, more durable and more comfortable than Balls, Dinners, Huzzas, or Hozannas. I will not say however, that these are amiss.

These five Victories are so striking, so extreamly remarkable, so impressive on the Imagination, that they never will be obliterated from the Memory of any Man, Woman, or Child in the United States. Nor can they remain unknown to any Nation of Europe. They will ferment in the Minds of this People till they generate a national self respect, a Spirit of Independence and a national Pride which has never before been felt in America. I wish the Republican Papers would do something more than they have done to make these splendid Atchievements more popular, and give full Scope to the national Joy. The Tide ought to run as rapidly as that in the Bay of Fundy or the Waters in the Falls of Niagara.

QUINCY, *March 31st*, 1813.

DEAR SIR, — “The History” is of no value, except on Account of its date. It was written and printed in Edes and Gill’s *Boston Gazette*, in the Intervall

between the first Congress in 1774 and the Second Congress in 1775, under the Signature of Novanglus. In this View it is a Document; an historical Memoir. To me personally, it is of some importance, as it is a record of the Principles on which I engaged in the Controversy with Great Britain and in the Revolutionary War, which have cost me so dear.

Who would then have thought that an Higginson Family <sup>1</sup> in 1813 would have as much Influence in America as an Hutchinson Family had in 1773 and 1774 and upon the same Principles and by the same means? The Rise of Bonaparte and his Power is not a more unexpected, or astonishing Phaenomenon. The Higginsons have now more Power, in Boston and in New England by one third than the Hutchinsons had then. This Accession of Strength has been obtained by a profligate System of Funds and Banks and by an immense Credit from Great Britain, by an Accession of an Host of Scotch and English and by a more deadly Sett against the Virtue, the Liberty, and Independence of this Country by the Scottish Cabinet,

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to Stephen Higginson and his relatives, whose story is told by Thomas Wentworth Higginson in *Life and Times of Stephen Higginson*, 1907. The Oliver-Hutchinson office holders may be found in the *Diary and Letters of Thomas Hutchinson*.

and by the mad Conduct of France for the last five or six and twenty Years.

The Independent Whig boasts of the Freedom of the Press! But where is it? Neither the *Chronicle* nor the *Patriot* have the Courage or the Skill of the *Boston Gazette* and *Massachusetts Spy* in 1770, 1, 2, 3, 4. And these when left to themselves were as foolish as need be. Accessible to every silly Boy and often inaccessible to the wisest Men.

Talk not to me of my Son for Governor or any Thing else. He is gone, as his Father did before him on a Romantic Expedition to Muscovy to his own Ruin and the Ruin of his Children. I pray God he [*torn*] return this Summer, whatever may become of M[*torn*] but Gull Traps.

I congratulate you, most sincerely, on your Son's Merit and Glory.

Please to enclose "The History" to me by the Mail.

Mr. Jefferson's Compliment is ingenious and flattering: but you would find Rivals and Envy and Opposition and Mortification to the Southward as well as the Northward.

QUINCY, May 9, 1813.

DEAR SIR, — Our Boston Rulers must be acknowledged to be profound Politicians. They appear

to have Studied the Uses of Solomon's Temple, and its furniture, and the Rites and Ceremonies of the Hebrew Polity. The final Causes of the Temples and Altars of Jupiter, Bacchus and Venus, etc., and the Festivals in honour of such Gods among the Greeks and Romans, appear to be well understood. The History of the Rise and Progress of the Christian Hierarchy is not unknown to them. The Town Meetings, the Assemblages, the Processions, the Festivals, the Theatrical Funerals, the Mausolaeums, the Equestrian Statues, the Busts, the Portraits and the Relicks, are all in the true Spirit. All these Things they understand as well as Loyola or Machiavel. The Maxim of Old Nick, "to pretend to great Zeal in Religion: but to be Sure, to have none," is quite familiar, to them.

I am not Sanguine, that "the modest Washington would have condemned such a Society."<sup>1</sup> His Cincinnati Society, was, his Hobby. He loved Adulation and could not resist her Charms. The real Friends of their Country are deluded and ruined by joining in Such extravagant Hozannas

<sup>1</sup> The Washington Benevolent Society was a political organization under the form of a charity. Its history is told in Morison, *Harrison Gray Otis*, vol. 1, p. 300.

to his Name. Your Son's refusal to be Gorget <sup>1</sup> Bearer, does him honour.

Mr. Q[ui]ncy's Oration <sup>2</sup> I have not seen. His Name, any more than that of Otis, ought not to be where it is. He is a Disciple of James Hillhouse <sup>3</sup> and Tim. Pic[kering]. The immense Fortune of his Family, made by Washington's System of Injustice, in his Funds and Banks, grapples him to his Name and System, with Hooks of Steel.

The Moment I received your Letter, announcing the Death of Dr. Rush,<sup>4</sup> I wrote again to Mr. Madison, on your Subject.

The Papers announce the Appointment of Dr. James Rush. What can I say?

You know much of Benj. Rush as a Physician and as a Professor, but it is impossible you should thoroughly know his Biography as a Statesman. from 1764 to his Death he acted an important Part on the political Theatre. He has suffered

<sup>1</sup> The gorget, worn by Washington in the colonial service of Virginia, was given by Martha (Custis) Peter to Josiah Quincy when the latter was Member of Congress from the Quincy District. He gave it, in April 1813, to the Washington Benevolent Society, and on the dissolution of that Society it returned to Mr. Quincy, who gave it, April 1858, to the Massachusetts Historical Society, where it now is.

<sup>2</sup> *Oration before the Washington Benevolent Society*, 1813.

<sup>3</sup> James Hillhouse (1754-1832), a prominent Federalist.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Benjamin Rush had died April 19, 1813.

more and gained less in Fame, Fortune, and Feelings by the Revolution than almost any other Man. His Family is virtuous numerous and distressed. My heart leaped, when I read the Appointment of James.

Gentle Shepherd, tell me why, when and where, you got such Sentiments and the Courage to divulge them? They must however be propagated and adopted. Do you remember the enthusiastic Panegyrics upon Garrick which were so long continued after his Death? And the manner and means by which they were at last discountenanced and arrested?

I have not yet demonstrated the Influence of a certain Circle. But I can, to your Conviction.

I am highly gratified that Mr. Gray has taken your Son into his Counting House.

QUINCY, *May 28, 1813.*

DEAR SIR, — You know not the Feeling I have for you. I wish Mr. Cutts and Mr. Seaver, may guess right; but you know Men are apt to guess as they wish.

You “do not see but Christians destroy each other full as much as Pagans.” To this I answer, Joshua, Pizarro, Alva, Lorrain, Laud, Bartholo-



mew's day, the Powder Plott, and the Irish Massacre. I will add that Democrats, Deists, and Atheists destroy each other, and the rest of the World, as much as Jews, Christians, or Pagans. Recollect the French Revolution. Of the death of Rush, I cannot write or speak.

Will our Accademy of Arts and Sciences, or our Medical Society, take any Notice of his Death?

I think your Son John will succeed in Philadelphia. His choice is I hope and believe judicious.

I must also "acquiesce in Deprivations."

But I have Something to communicate of more importance to the U. S. than you, or I, or all our Posterity. What? Says your Self Love and mine, can this be? ! ! ! ?

I have received a Book from Philadelphia with the Title of "Sketches of the Naval History of The United States, from the Commencement of the Revolutionary War to the present time." By Thomas Clark, Topographical Engineer of the United States: printed for Mathew Cary. Philadelphia, 1813.

The *Patriot* and the *Chronicle* would do more honor to the Papers, and more good to the Union by advertising this Book, than by many their columns of political Speculation and Controversy. This is my Opinion and I have no more to say.

QUINCY, *June 5th*, 1813.<sup>1</sup>

DEAR SIR, — I read, within a few days an Address to General and Governor Gage, from the Bar, and the Name of Caleb Strong, among the Addressers. This, to be sure, is a characteristic Trait.

In former parts of my life, I have known, somewhat of this Thing called "*A Bar.*" A significant Word and an important Thing!

By all that I remember of the History of England the British Constitution, has been preserved by *the Bar*. In all civil contests and political Struggles, the Lawyers have been divided: some have advocated the Prerogatives of the Crown; and some the Rights of the People. All, or at least a Majority have united at last in restoring and improving, the Constitution.

The Principles, the Characters, and the Views of the American Bar, at this time, is unknown, or incomprehensible to me. What is the American Bar? Who are the Men? What are their names? Has their Education been alike? Are their Principles the same. Are Tucker and Story,<sup>2</sup> united

<sup>1</sup> This letter appears in the *Writings of John Adams*, vol. x, p. 38, but is retained for its reminder of an interesting occasion.

<sup>2</sup> St. George Tucker (1752-1828), editor of Blackstone's *Commentaries*, to which he appended a "Commentary on the Constitution." Story had been appointed to the Supreme Court of the United States, but his *Commentaries on the Constitution* did not appear until 1833.

in Theory? I might proceed with my Questions for half an hour.

But I will conclude with an Anecdote. When Governor Hutchinson, was about to leave his Government, and embark, for England, a Meeting of the Bar, was summoned in Boston. We met. A Motion was made to "address the Governor, upon his departure from the Government of his native Province. It was peculiarly proper, for the Bar, who had served under him as Chief Justice of the Province, and witnessed his great Abilities and Integrity, to express publicly their high Esteem of his Character and approbation of his Conduct as Chief Justice, as Lieutenant Governor, and as Governor."

No Opposition was made, though Father Dana, Joseph Reed,<sup>1</sup> Samuel Swift, and Josiah Quincy, Junior, Esquire, were present. All was going on swimmingly.

After some time, John Adams, whose destiny has always been to mount Breaches and lead the forlorn hope, arose from his Seat and modestly inquired whether the proposed Address was to be presented to the Governor, and go to the Public as the Address of the Bar as a Body, to be signed by

<sup>1</sup> An error for William Reed.

their President or Secretary? or whether it was to be signed and presented as the Act of Individuals? The Answer from all Quarters was, "*by the Bar, as a Body to be Sure.*"

John Adams then said, it would be unfair to send out to the World an Address, as an Act of the whole Bar, when some of them could not approve it. He had no desire to controul any Man, in the expression of his Sentiments: but was not willing to have his own suppressed. He had no Objection, to an Address to be drawn signed and presented by those Gentlemen who should approve it: but the Bar was not a legal Corporation; and had no public Authority. The Minority therefore, however small, could not be controuled and ought not to be restrained from expressing their Opinions; and ought not to be involved in a general Vote. This ought to have been sufficient but it was not. Still the Cry was "The Bar!" The Address must be from the Bar!

Poor John, was obliged at last to rise, once more, and to say: "To be Sure, it is in the Power of the Majority, to vote and to address, and to present and publish their Address as the Act of the Bar: but it was not in their Power to prevent the Minority from publishing their dissent. He knew not

whether he should be joined or countenanced by any other: but he would attend and when the Address should be discussed, he would give his Opinion and his Reasons, and if an Address was finally adopted by the Bar, as a Bar, in which any Thing should be inserted to which he could not agree, he would enter his protest against it in Writing and assign his reasons. Whether any other Gentleman would join him, he knew not. But, if not, he would stand alone. Josiah Quincy, Junior, Esquire, and Samuel Swift, Esquire, as if appalled and astonished, sate mute. John Lowell, Esquire, said in a kind of hurry: "*this declaration does great honour to Mr. Adams.*" Daniel Leonard, Esquire, said: "*If there is to be a protest, and reasons assigned, and all this to be published, the whole design will be defeated, and it would be better to have no address at all.*"

John Adams then said: "He neither approved the Administration of Mr. Hutchinson as Lieutenant Governor, as Chief Justice, or as Governor, and he would not suffer his opinion to be equivocal."

Your Knowledge of human nature is deep enough to infer the Character of Lowell, Leonard, and Quincy from what they said, or what they said not.

The plan of an Address from the Bar, as a Body was laid aside.

Had John Adams been compelled to produce his Protest, Richard Dana, John Reed,<sup>1</sup> Samuel Swift, Benjamin Kent, and Josiah Quincy, junior, would have signed it; Auchmuty, Sewall, Fitch, Samuel Quincy, Ben. Gridley, Blowers, Casneau, etc., etc., would have been against them.

You have and ought to have a tenderness for the memories of Hutchinsons and Olivers. So have I, more than you suspect. Yet you must know the Truth and nothing but the Truth, from

JOHN ADAMS.

TO JOHN FOTHERGILL WATERHOUSE

QUINCY, *August 5, 1813.*

DEAR SIR, — I thank you for Dr. Staughton's Eulogium on Dr. Rush.<sup>2</sup> It is indeed "appropriate, learned and eloquent."

But I know not what to think of Eulogiums, Pictures, Statues, or Monuments. If they could be consecrated by Truth to Virtue or to Honour, they would be venerable.

<sup>1</sup> An error for William Reed.

<sup>2</sup> William Staughton (1770-1829), pastor of the First Baptist Church in Philadelphia. His eulogium on Dr. Rush was published in 1813.



My Feelings have been more affected by the Words "In memoriam ingenii, Boerhaaviani Salutiferi," which I have seen on a Stone in Holland, than with all I have read of the Pyramids of Egypt.

Monuments to the Professors of desolation and death, are more honoured than any others. And I know not, whether it is not necessary it should be so: for perhaps nothing short of this would animate Men in defence of their Countries.

I rejoice that Dr. Rush has left his own Life in Writing; <sup>1</sup> for, from an Acquaintance of nine and thirty Years, I believe him, to have been one of the best of Men. The Kingdom of Virtue is not of this World. Yet Virtue, I firmly believe, is its own reward. My heart is too full to Say more.

One of my first thoughts on the News of Dr. Rush's death; which came from you, through your worthy Father; who resembles him, in Character, and too nearly in fortune: was, that I would pronounce his Eulogium, at the head of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, of which he was an Honorary Member and I had then the honour to be President. But Eyes worn out with Use,

<sup>1</sup> A fragment of Rush's autobiography was published "privately for the benefit of his Descendants" in 1905, by Louis Alexander Biddle, as *A Memorial*.

hands trembling with Age and palsy; and above all, Consciousness of incapacity to do Justice to his Life, his Works and his Character; soon dissipated the fond illusion.

I hope Dr. Rush's Life, as written by himself will be printed and his Works collected in a body. They will do honour to this youthful and inconsiderate Nation.

Politicks and War are transient as the Waves of the Sea. Health, and Nature, and Science, and Morals, and Religion, are permanent, and will be perpetually interesting.

So believes and so feels, your hearty Well-wisher.

TO BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE

QUINCY, *September 17, 1813.*

DEAR SIR, — I receive with pleasure, the News of your removal to Cambridge and establishment in Office, in which may you, and your amiable Lady, Sons, and daughters,<sup>1</sup> continue to do honour, and administer medicine, to this Country, diseased in Body and mind.

<sup>1</sup> The first wife of Waterhouse was Elizabeth Oliver, by whom he had a son, John Fothergill Waterhouse, and a daughter, Elizabeth Watson Waterhouse (1793-1824), who married, 1817, Henry Ware, Jr.

There is not a more melancholly contemplation, to a mind that soberly thinks, than the honours that are done to military Characters by Sea and Land: unless we except those to spiritual heros in the Church militant. What has not been done, by military discipline and ecclesiastical discipline, in this World of War, of Words and Swords?

As I have long seen that this Nation must become warlike and a maritime Power; I cannot but rejoice in the honours bestowed on our Defenders: but I rejoice with as much trembling as a Philosopher ought to feel. Rapt into future times, methinks I see ——— no dangers, however, from the Service by Sea; comparable to those on Land.

The naval Spirit rises, on the Lakes as well as on the Ocean. And it must rise, or we shall be hewers of Wood, and in the Condition of the Wood-Cutter on mount Ida, who, according to Theocritus, could not find Wood for Trees.

The Conduct of Varnum<sup>1</sup> and Seaver,<sup>2</sup> and others, has never been comprehensible to me: nor

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Bradley Varnum (1750-1821), member of the United States House of Representatives, 1795-1811, and of the Senate, 1811-1821.

<sup>2</sup> Ebenezer Seaver (1763-1844), member of Congress from Massachusetts, 1803-1813.

has that of General Heath.<sup>1</sup> Well meaning men, as far as I know: but secret, concealed and cunning. But Massachusetts will not be governed by such Men. We are too proud. We must have Gentlemen. We must have men of Education. We never stooped so low, as in the choice of Sullivan.<sup>2</sup> But Sullivan was far above Heath, Varnum, or Seaver. Yet I would have made Heath Commander in Chief, [*Nearly a whole line cut off.*] Enough of Paradoxes.

I have been repairing or rather rebuilding a Tomb for my Daughter.<sup>3</sup> It is done. I am now replacing a Stone to my Father, instead of one erected by me fifty-two Years ago, which Men, Women, Boys, Girls, and Cattle had long since demolished. Whether I shall raise one for myself, where it will be raised, by whom, and how soon, I, as yet, neither know, nor much, care.

Δίος δεγελίετο βουλή. I know not whether the Greek is correct in Grammar, or Orthography, or Application.

<sup>1</sup> William Heath (1737-1814), whose amusing *Memoirs* are characteristic of the man.

<sup>2</sup> James Sullivan (1744-1808), member of the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts, 1775, of the Continental Congress, 1782, state Attorney-General, 1790-1807, and Governor of Massachusetts, 1807-1808.

<sup>3</sup> Abigail (Adams) Smith, wife of General William Stephens Smith. She died August 15, 1813, aged forty-eight years.

I own I have not the Foresight of the Tumble-Bug: Yet in my Conscience, I believe, I had more and clearer, than this Nation or its Government for fourteen years past.

I am not yet weary of Life, nor do I wait with impatience for an obscure death, or a splendid one. The former must soon be my Lott. May I be prepared. Fame, Fortune, Power! I have always despized ye all. *Mens conscia recti*, is and always has been, all in all.

To thee, Supream Power, who knowest all my weaknesses, Imperfections and Follies, I appeal.

QUINCY, Oct. 28, '14.

DEAR WATERHOUSE, — Your Letter of the 10th is too delicious, to be disgraced by Ceremonies and Apologies in my Answer.

You might as rationally ascribe the Events of this *Annus mirabilis*, or any *Année la plus chétive et méprisable* to the Power of Animalcules in Cayàn Pepper Water, as to the Power or Policy of Men.

I see nothing in the History of Napoleon more wonderfull or inexplicable, than in that of Zingis, of Alexander, of Caesar, of Agamemnon, of Rienzi, of King Theodore, or Mazzianello, of Jack

Cade, Wat Tyler, Alexander Hamilton or Aaron Burr, Robespierre or Danton, or Brissot.

I have very lately read over again, with Attention Quintus Curtius, and the Anabasis, with the express Intention of comparing the Actions of Alexander, and the conduct of the grecian Commanders, especially of Xenophon, who by his *own Acknowledgement* was the best of them; with what we know of the Life of Napoleon, and scruple not to say that the Corsican was worse than the Greeks, and a Saint in Comparison with the Macedonian. I earnestly recommend to you to read them again not only with the same view but many others.

I most cordially agree with you, and with the oldest Statesman in America, Governor Mackean,<sup>1</sup> who in a charming Letter I received from him a few days ago says that: "God Almighty has always been our General and Commander in Chief," and we have never had any other.

We have nevertheless had exalted Heroes in subordinate Commands by Land and especially by Sea. Have you seen Mathew Cary's Naval History in the name of Clark?

A Lady of mighty Family in Pennsylvania, told

<sup>1</sup> Thomas McKean (1734-1817).



me, very candidly that she had been uniformly a Tory; she thought England right, and America wrong, till the Battle of Lexington. But when she found the blood ran; and the English were determined to kill us, *she found Feelings in her heart that she had never before suspected to be there.* I doubt not she has been for many Years past as much a Tory as she was before the Battle of Lexington, and that she is by this time as much a Whig as she was after it. Feelings! Feelings! Fear is a stronger Feeling than even Love of Country, in some hearts.

“We shall have a long and bloody War.” This I have said and believed for thirty Years and more: and have constantly prepared for it, as far as my feeble Influence extended.

As to the New England Army, if Chaos is to come again we must enlist under Mackean’s Commander in Chief.

The Negotiation at Ghent is a *Ruse de Guerre*.

QUINCY, Dec’r 2, 1814.

DEAR SIR, — Gerry! Gerry! Gerry! You was the last of my Colleagues!<sup>1</sup> I am left alone! It cannot be long before I shall join you. What

<sup>1</sup> He died in Washington, D. C., November 23, 1814.

Tidings shall I carry to you? That a total degeneracy has prevail'd; or that the ancient Virtues are revived?

Are there none who rejoice in this Exit? I shall soon give them another moment of delight: and much good may it, do them.

Ames and Parsons set the World in a howl of Grief. Dana and Gerry die, without Ceremony!

I cannot write of the amiable Family. The thought of them affects me too much; more than I can bear.

The 37th Psalm cannot be reconciled to the History or Experience of this Life. It must have a prophetic relation to another and a better.

Present my Compliments to your Daughters, and if they are reading the "Discourses on Davila," pray them to compare him with the History of the World Since 1789. Your Friend.

QUINCY, *May 22, 1815.*

DEAR SIR, — Your favor is received. Gallia changefull as a Child at play "now calls in Princes: now drives away," and this is exactly conformable to Examples sett her by England, Scotland, and Ireland in the 17th Century; to that of Holland, Geneva, Switzerland, etc., in the 18th, and Austria,

Russia, Sweeden, Prussia, Saxony, and the whole Confederation of the Rhine, in the 19th. And our dear beloved Country has not been wanting to the Duties of Fraternity in exhibiting proofs that she is of the same Family.

I am not about to become a Leader or Follower in Theology. To my own Master I stand or fall.

As to Napoleon, I say again, read Alexander, in Quintus Curtius, in Plutarch, or Arrian; read Charles 12th and Oliver Cromwell, read Jack Cade and Wat Tyler, Rienzi, King Theodore, Mazzionello and Pascal Paoli. Read all these Puppets, and then ask is there a Juggler behind the Scene, who exhibits all these Tragedies, Commedies, and Farces? For the Benefit of a Night? Oh! No! 'Tis Wisdom and Benevolence, too profound and exalted for thy comprehension, poor ignorant superficial Mortal as thou art. What an Enthusiast I am!

Your Fable of the Westphalia Hogs, if Mankind would but seriously consider it, is worth as much as your kine Pock Inoculation.

Dean Swift's Yahoos are not half so instructive as your Westphalia Hogs. I insist upon it that you tell me the Author, the Book the Chapter, the Verse, in which you found that Couplet

Hogs of Westphalia are a Saving brood  
 What one lets drop, the other takes for food.

I do not remember it; tho' I have some Suspicion  
 that I have seen it.

It is the most pithy, the most laconic, the most  
 nervous Essence of Party Spirit that I have ever  
 read. I say as Swift said of Pope

When he can in one Couplet fix  
 More Sense than I can put in Six  
 I cry, pox take him and his Witt  
 It gives me such an envious fit.

It is the History of all Factions and all Parties I  
 have ever known. I am your steady Friend.

QUINCY, *May 30th, '15.*

WATERHOUSE, — You made that Westphalian  
 Couplet yourself. Sleeping or waking, nobody  
 but you could have dreamed or thought of

Hogs of Westphalia are a saving brood  
 What one lets drop, the other takes for food.

It so perfectly and summarily comprehends the  
 whole Genius and history of Party and Faction  
 from the *Ipse dixit* of Pythagoras to the disciples  
 of the Scottish Creolian of Nevis.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Hamilton.

And does "Jonathan" think, "the Roman catholic Priests of Boston, the best Priests of Boston"? Parson Prince, the Chronologist, who ex[c]laim's "Oh strange," and "Oh sad."

Upon elementary Principles Napoleon is the most legitimate Sovereign in Europe, having been twice elected by a great Nation. If the August conclave at Vienna can decree a King for France why may they not destine the Duke of York, or Mrs. Clark, to be King of our beloved united States? Why may they not lay all Nations and Kingdoms under Inderdict? Popes have sett Precedents enough.

I believe you are mistaken. It is Mackean of Bowdoin Colledge not McKean the Orator at Cambridge, who has edited Goldsmith.<sup>1</sup> According to your Account, he is an Enthusiast. I have been coaxed by a fascinating Woman into a Subscription for the Work. If your Account of it is correct, I shall wish my name to Cobbet's Letters.<sup>2</sup>

[*In the writing of Abigail Adams*] ah poor Man, dalilah has shorn his Locks! Not his wife, however. A. A.

<sup>1</sup> It was Joseph McKean of Harvard College, with his *Addition to Wood's Continuation of Goldsmith's 'History of England.'* Boston, 1815.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters on the late War between the United States and Great Britain.* New York, 1815.

QUINCY, Dec'r 19th, 1815.

DEAR SIR, — Permit me to sympathize with you and your Children on the loss of your amiable and excellent Consort. As my reflections on this mournfull Event can be no other than your own, I shall spare you the pain of reading them.

I thank you for your Letter of the 14th and the Pamphlet inclosed.

Do you know the Meaning of the Words "*Awakenings?*" and "*Revivals?*" I am old enough to have attended the Predications of that great Model of theatrical Grace and Elegance, of harmonious Oratory, and at the same time, as I verily believe, of fervent Piety, the Reverend Mr. George Whitefield.<sup>1</sup> I have since seen and heard Larrive,<sup>2</sup> at Paris, and Mrs. Siddons in London.

The "*Awakenings and Revivals*" excited by Mr. Whitefield now forgotten, would fill Volumes which would make you laugh and cry, like a Madman. Laugh at the Absurdities and weep over the Wickedness of your Species.

"Awakenings and Revivals" are now running over the whole Globe. They have awakened the

<sup>1</sup> George Whitefield (1714-1770), whose visits to New England had permanent influence.

<sup>2</sup> Jean Mauduit de Larive (1749-1827) of the Théâtre Français, who long occupied the first place in tragedy.



Doctrine, that "there must be but one Religion in the World." This reminds me of a Dialogue between Dr. Mayhew and my Schoolmaster first and my Tenant afterwards, a zealous Churchman, Mr. Joseph Cleverly.<sup>1</sup>

MAYHEW. Mr. Cleverly! If you were an absolute Monarch, for Example, like a King of France or Spain, what Regulations would you make in regard to Religion?

CLEVERLY. I would have but one Religion in my Dominions.

MAYHEW. Would you persecute all who differed from it?

CLEVERLY. Yes. No Persecution could be too severe to secure the Unity of the Church.

This Dialogue I had from the Lips of Dr. Mayhew himself: and I had not then nor have had since a doubt of its literal Truth for I had before and after that, held twenty Conversations with Cleverly in which he had uniformly avowed the same Bigotry, Superstition, and Enthusiasm.

Our Parson Briant,<sup>2</sup> who was as facetious as the Great Paley, used to say that Cleverly would be the best Man in the World, if he had no Religion.

<sup>1</sup> Of Braintree, a graduate of Harvard College in 1733, died in 1802, aged eighty-nine years.

<sup>2</sup> Lemuel Briant (1725?-1754).

According to the Pamphlet you sent me, we must all pay voluntarily or involuntarily, Tithes, or Fifths, or thirds, or halves, or all we have, to send Bibles and Missionaries to convert all Men and save their Souls. I am confident that all the Property of Europe and America would not be sufficient to convert Asia and Africa.

Mankind must have a Crusade, a War of Reformation, a French Revolution, or Anti-Revolution, to amuse them and preserve them from Ennui.

The Christian is the Religion of the heart: but the heart is deceitfull above all things and, unless controuled by the Dominion of the Head, will lead us into salt ponds.

Awakenings and Revivals are not peculiar to Religion. Philosophy and Policy at times are capable of taking the Infection. The Distemper broke out in France in 1785 with dreadfull Symptoms of the Purple kind. In 1814 and 1815 it has seized all Europe. Cannot you and your Friend Jenner discover some recondite Inoculation, to moderate its deleterious Rage?

I fear I must leave behind me to Posterity the Character of a Grogniard, a Grogneur, a Grumbletonian, a Cassandra, or a Laocoon. For I can not go away with every Wind, especially when two

hurricanes blow from opposite Points of the Compass.

P. S. Father Niles's Controversy with my Parson Bryant contributed very much to moderate The Awakenings and Revivals of Mr. Whitefield.<sup>1</sup> And I entertain a pleasing hope that Dr. Morse's Controversy in favour of Athanasianism, will operate as a Soporific, to some of the Unnatural Awakenings of the present times.

QUINCY, *June 25, '16.*

DEAR WATERHOUSE, — In the Style of John and Jonathan Bull I give you a thousand thanks for your Letter of the 18th and the Journal of the Surgeon.<sup>2</sup>

The great James Otis, whose Style was hasty, rough and coarse, and who hated and despised Correction, often gave some of his compositions to Sam. Adams, whose language was harmonious Soft and oily, as Otis expressed himself, "To quicu Yeuhicu it."

<sup>1</sup> Briant published a discourse on *The Absurdity and Blasphemy of depreciating Moral Vertue*, Boston, 1749; which called out a reply from Rev. Samuel Niles entitled, *A Vindication of divers Important Gospel Doctrines, and of the Teachers and Professors of them against the Injurious Reflections and Misrepresentations* — of Briant. Boston, 1752.

<sup>2</sup> *Journal of a Young Man of Massachusetts, captured at Sea by the British.* May 1813. 2d ed., Boston, 1816.

Who "quicu Yeuhicued" this little Book? <sup>1</sup>

*Aut Erasmus aut Diabolus.*

It has so much of the Air of Romance, and the American Character is so perfectly sustained, as far as I have read, or heard in it, that I wish 40,000 Copies were sold. I never laughed so much in reading Don Quixote, or McFingal.

Shall we have a joyfull and harmonious Day of Independence and chain up the Monster Party or not? My cousin Brooks <sup>2</sup> begins his Career decently. But I shall not fail to lament my Dexter <sup>3</sup> on that day or any other.

I presume the *Parcae* have decreed that Monroe shall be P[resident]. Why should I grieve, when grieving I must bear: and take with Guilt what guiltless I might share? But I had rather have had Dexter.

QUINCY, Feb. 26, 1817.

DEAR SIR, — Where the Fine Arts are studied or practiced there should be a Trybunal of Criticism always in Session, before which every new production should be arraigned and tried; by no other

<sup>1</sup> The letters are quite clear, but the pronunciation intended can only be conjectured.

<sup>2</sup> John Brooks, Governor of Massachusetts, 1816-1823.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel Dexter (1761-1816).

laws however than Truth or Nature, and no other penalty than Reputation in the public Opinion.

“Are we not in too great a hurry, in our Zeal for the fine Arts?” This is as noble and beautiful a question, as that of the Academy of Dijon in 1750.<sup>1</sup> It is not probable that it will soon be discussed in America with larger Views, with more learning or more perfect Eloquence, than it was by J. J. Rousseau and his Antagonists, more than half a Century ago.

I am not however of Rousseau’s Opinion. His Notions of the purity of Morals in savage Nations and the earliest Ages of civilised Nations are mere Chimeras.

My humble opinion is that Sciences and Arts have vastly and immensely ameliorated the condition of Man, and even improved his Morals. The progress however has been awfully slow.

Is it possible to inlist the “Fine Arts,” on the Side of Truth, of Virtue, of Piety, or even of Honour? From the dawn of History they have been prostituted to the Service of Superstition and despotism. Read Herodotus, Pausanias, Plutarch, Lucian, and twenty others, not forgetting several

<sup>1</sup> Rousseau, *Discours qui a remporté le Prix à l’Academie de Dijon*, 1750.

of the Christian Fathers and see how the fine Arts have been employed. Read Eustace's classical Tour in Italy.<sup>1</sup>

See there the Fine Arts in perfection. See there the Church of St. Peter! See there the Massacre of St. Bartholomew's day in Paris exhibited as an Example.

See there, the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, painted by Raphael, as plunging into a Chaos of Matter, and boxing it about with his Fists and kicking it about with his Feet, till he buffets it into an orderly world.

Timaeus of Locris is much more rational. His System is: "There are three Principles eternal, God, Matter, and Form. God only had Ideas, Reason, Logos. And this Logos arranged Matter into form. It did not hop into Chaos, or Matter and kick and cuff it into Order. But the Goodness of God and the eternal Energies of his Logos made the best World he could out of inert stupid matter.

History and Epic Poetry are worse than Architecture, Sculpture, and Painting, because they are more lasting deceptions.

It is in vain to think of restraining the Fine Arts. Luxury will follow Riches and the Fine Arts will

<sup>1</sup> John Chetwode Eustace, *A Classical Tour through Italy*, 1813.



come with Luxury in spite of all that Wisdom can do.

I know nothing of "The Mysterious Chief."

I hope the slaying will soon be good enough for you to visit, Old

JOHN ADAMS.

QUINCY, *Mar.* 17, 1817.

DEAR SIR, — Have you read certain Strictures upon Painters and Paintings in the Newspapers? What do you think of them?

I am pleased with his gratitude to Copeley,<sup>1</sup> but I believe he was not perfect Master of Copeley's Merit.

There is a Portrait of Justice Dana<sup>2</sup> in his Robe, bands and tie Wigg of a Barrister at Law, now no doubt in possession of his Descendants. There is a full Length Portrait of Governor Adams,<sup>3</sup> probably in possession of his Daughter. The Hon. Mr. Quincy has a Portrait of his Grandfather.<sup>4</sup> And there are many others. In these Portraits there is Truth Nature and Fact. You can

<sup>1</sup> John Singleton Copley (1737-1815).

<sup>2</sup> Richard Dana (1699-1772).

<sup>3</sup> Samuel Adams (1722-1803). The portrait is three-quarters length.

<sup>4</sup> Josiah Quincy (1709-1784). The portrait was painted in 1769.

scarcely help discoursing with them, asking them questions and receiving answers.

I wish I could see you oftener, but as I know this is impossible I can only express the regard of

JOHN ADAMS.

QUINCY, *March 19th*, 1817.

DEAR —, Can you prescribe rules for painting, a perception? a reminiscence? a judgment? a ratiocination?

Do you think there will ever arise an original Genius who will invent an Art of painting a debate in a Boston Town Meeting, or an Argument at the Bar? It would not be a Wonder, equal to your Jennerian Inoculation?

If such a Phenomenon should appear, I have a Subject to propose to him.

The local Scene is the Council Chamber in the old State House, commonly called the Town house in Boston; an Apartment as respectable as the Scene of the declaration of American Independence. The Chronology is February Term, A. D. 1761.

Then and there was argued the great Question.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Writs of assistance.

Mr. Gridley and his Pupil, Mr. Otis were the disputants. Then and there the "*Non sine Diis animosus Infans*" was born. No question ever argued by Demosthenes or Cicero ever had such Effects upon this Globe. Their Oratory was unsuccessfull. James Otis's tryumphant. What Effects has it produced? I shudder at the recollection of them; and if I should give the reins to my Imagination, in a rapture into futurity, I should tremble still more at the prospect.

But to the Picture. Five Judges, with the great Hutchinson at their head as Chief Justice, all arrayed in their splendid Scarlet Robes, with their broad Bands and immense Judicial Wiggs. Mr. Gridley and Mr. Otis in their Costume of Barristers, that is to say in their black Gowns, their broad Bands, and tie Wiggs as Barristers at Law. To add to the Magnificence of the Scene, there were, too, Pictures hung up in the most conspicuous part of the Room, of King Charles the Second, and King James the Second, at more than full length, I believe of Vandyke, in all the Glory of their most splendid Royal Robes.

Now can a Painter of real Genius wish for a better Subject. All the Colours of the Rainbow will be in requisition. The Character of the Age,

or rather of the moment will be precisely ascertained. Bernard and Hutchison had produced this Scenery, Otis was the Soul of the day and the Soul of this Country for ten Years following.

Do you think such a Picture would be admired endured or tolerated, at this day? I could write you a Volume of Commentaries upon this Letter, historical, political phylosophical and moral: but the forces fail of

JOHN ADAMS.

[*Endorsed by Waterhouse*] Written with that enthusiasm wc. is as necessary to virtue as to genius.

QUINCY, *March 25, 1817.*

DEAR SIR, — The great question was “Whether Writs of Assistants, were legal, or illegal; constitutional or unconstitutional?”

“Writs of Assistants!” You will indignantly say. “What are Writs of Assistants? I understand no more about Writs of Assistants, than about ‘*The great question.*’” I believe you; and will endeavour to give you some hints.

When the British Ministry received from General Amherst his dispatches announcing his conquest of Montreal, and the consequent Annihilation of the French Government and Power in America in 1759; they immediately conceived

the design and took the resolution of conquering the English Colonies, and subjecting them to the unlimited Authority of Parliament. With this intension they sent orders to the Collector of the Customs in Boston, Mr. Charles Paxton,<sup>1</sup> to apply to the civil Authority for Writs of Assistants to enable them to command all Sherifs and Constables to attend and aid them in breaking open Houses, Stores, Shops, Cellars, Ships, Bales, Trunks, Casks, Packages, to search for Merchandises, Goods, and Wares which had been imported, against the prohibitions, or without paying the Taxes imposed by the Acts of Trade, *i.e.* by certain Acts of Parliament, which had been procured to be passed by a combination of selfish Intrigues between North American Governors and West India Planters. These Acts never had been executed, and there never had been a time, when they would have been or could have been obeyed.

Mr. Paxton, no doubt consulting with Governor Bernard, Mr. Hutchinson and all the principal Crown Officers, thought it not prudent to begin his Operations in Boston. He instructed his Deputy, Mr. Cockle,<sup>2</sup> in Salem, to apply by petition

<sup>1</sup> Charles Paxton, a Commissioner of Customs.

<sup>2</sup> John Cockle.

to the Superiour Court, then sitting in that Town, *i.e.* in November, 1760; Stephen Sewall was Chief Justice. Sewall was a Friend of Liberty, civil and religious. He had doubts of the Legality of the Writ; and of the Authority of the Court to grant it. Not one of his Brother Judges uttered Word in favour of it. But as it was an Application on the Part of the Crown, it must be heard and determined. After consultation the Court ordered the question ("the great question") to be argued in Boston, at the next february Term. In the mean time Chief Justice Sewall died, and Lieutenant Governor Hutchinson was appointed Chief Justice in his Stead. Every observing and thinking Man knows, that it was for the direct purpose of managing "*The great question.*"

An Alarm was spread far and wide. The Merchants of Salem and Boston applied to Mr. Otis and offered him great Fees to defend them against this terrible menacing Monster. Otis engaged in the cause; but would take no Fees. They engaged also Mr. Oxenbridge Thatcher. They applied to Mr. Pratt,<sup>1</sup> but he had been solicited by Mr. Paxton, and refused to engage on either Side; but he was present and must have a corner in your

<sup>1</sup> Benjamin Pratt (1710-1763).



Picture. Wit, Sense, Imagination, Genius, Pathos, Reason, Prudence, Eloquence, Learning, Science, and immense Reading, hanging by the Shoulders on two Crutches covered with a drab Great Coat. You must also paint all the Boston Bar sitting at the Tables in Gowns, Bands, and Wiggs: and even I have an Ambition of a Seat at that Table, looking like a short, thick Archbishop of Canterbury, with a Pen in my hand carelessly noting those miserable minutes that Judge Minot has printed in his History, with one or two fantastical Expressions interpolated by Jonathan Williams Austin. Would not Copely have made a great Painting of that Counsell Chamber and its Contents? What was the death of Chatham? What was the death of Pearson, to this day's exhibition and Exertions? mere baubles.

Mr. Gridley was engaged one Side of the Crown and supported his cause with his usual, Learning, Ingenuity and dignity. Mr. Thatcher argued with usual Sobriety, Ingenuity, and fluency. But Otis was a flaming Fire. With a promptitude of classical allusions, a depth of research, a profusion of legal Authorities, a prophetic glance of his Eyes into futurity, and a torrent of impetuous overbearing Eloquence, he carried all before him.

The Seeds of Independence were sown. Every Man, of a crowded Audience appeared to me to go away ready to take Arms against Writs of Assistants.

The *animosus Infans* was American Independence, which was born on that day. You no doubt know Sir William Jones's Motto upon Franklin's Medal.<sup>1</sup> James Otis was Gridley's Pupil.

Has not the cause of Liberty, civil and religious, under imprudent management since 1761 produced Events to make one Shudder? The Reformation of Religion and Government is not yet compleat. It must go on; it will go on; and it ought to go on. But is there not reason to fear, that it will be rashly conducted? And even conducted with all the discretion of which human Nature is capable; can such powerfull Interests be overcome, and prejudices so deeply rooted be eradicated without great Struggles?

Suzan will comment on your Son's Butts, etc.

The inclosed Extract will show how the Reformation is commencing in Canada, after our glorious Example.

<sup>1</sup> "Non sine Diis animosus Infans."

QUINCY, *June 4, 1817.*

DEAR SIR, — Your pathetic Letter of the 2d has filled my heart with Sympathy and Grief. Your Son,<sup>1</sup> by all that I knew, or have heard of him, would have been an ornament to Society. Your Sorrow at his loss must be exquisite. I can give you no better advice for your Consolation, than to read your favourite Dr. Barrow.

It is the Lot of humanity! You are not, alone! If I look back for sixty Years, what a long catalogue do I see of young Men of the brightest Genius and most promising hopes, fallen Victims to excessive Ardour in pursuit of Knowledge? It seems as if the World was not worthy of such Lights.

If I may compare my Afflictions with yours, I have lost Grandfathers and Grand Mothers, Fathers and Mothers, Brothers and Sisters, Sons and Daughters, Grand-Children and a great-Grand-child, and I cannot recollect any of them without a Thrill.<sup>2</sup> I say nothing of political, literary, or civil Friends. I was once in a similar Situation with your Son, Benjamin. An Adjournment of

<sup>1</sup> He died at Charleston, S. C., May 18, 1817.

<sup>2</sup> He had not then lost his most excellent wife. — *Note by Waterhouse.* (Mrs. Adams died October 28, 1818.)

Congress, for a few Weeks, in the Fall of 1775 gave me an Opportunity of visiting my Constituents; and the hopes of seeing my Family for a few days. Arriving, on horseback, from Philadelphia, within a quarter of a mile of my house, I met an Acquaintance, who informed me that my favourite Brother,<sup>1</sup> who had commanded a Company of Volunteers in the Army at Cambridge from the 19th of April, and there taken the Camp Dissentary, lay at the Point of death, given over by his Physicians. Bouyed up with the joyous hope of embracing my Wife and Children in a few minutes, how was I cast down? The next morning brought the fatal News of his death. I attended his funeral; and all the Joy of my Visit home, was turned into mourning!

The Calamity of your Friend Jenner affects me very Sensibly.<sup>2</sup>

However, Resign, my Friend! Resign! Not merely because you cannot help these Things; but because you firmly believe they are intended for your good and mine; and what is of infinitely greater Importance, the World's.

<sup>1</sup> Elihu Adams (1741-1776).

<sup>2</sup> A depression of spirits, or gloominess, unfitting him for correspondence or social intercourse. — *Note by Waterhouse.*

You have still Children, Sons and Daughters who do you honour, and will console your Age.

Let me hear none of the silly Whinings of Tacitus, Cicero, and Quintillian. We are not to exist, to vegetate, eternally here.

I am, dear Sir, with deep sympathetic Feelings with you, and your Family, and with the Widow and Children of my much more ancient Friend Dalton, your assured Friend and humble Servant.

QUINCY, *Aug. 17th*, 1817.

DEAR SIR, — I fear I have not answered your letter of 20th of June. That of the 8th of August I certainly have not. I have been justly accused of Imbecility and Dotage for twenty Years past. Yet I seem to be a Man of more consequence now, than I ever was before, in my whole Life.

What a Cloud of Reminiscences, has your last Letter, exhaled in my old brain! Sewall,<sup>1</sup> with whom I gazed through a Telescope at the Satelites of Jupiter, from the Roof of *old* Harvard Colledge, sixty-two years ago: and Langdon,<sup>2</sup> with whom I put the first Flag of the United States forty two years ago, upon a floating Castle.

<sup>1</sup> David Sewall (1735-1835).

<sup>2</sup> John Langdon (1741-1819).

I read Fresnoy <sup>1</sup> again with pleasure. He will excite Reflection and purify Taste.

Eustace should have read Gebelin,<sup>2</sup> Bryant,<sup>3</sup> Farmer,<sup>4</sup> and Dupuis <sup>5</sup> before he travelled. It is plain, that with all his classical knowledge of the Poets, he understood nothing that he saw. He is a ferocious Roman catholic John Bull, with plausible Affectation of Candour, Moderation, and Toleration. In one Word he is a Catholic and I believe a Jesuitical Priest. At the same time a tedious, fatiguing Writer.

I have no better Opinion of Gibbon<sup>6</sup> than of Eustace. Books written for Money have no Authority with me.

I wish our Navy Officers knew what they were

<sup>1</sup> Nicolas Lenglet-Dufresnoy (1674-1755). His *Géographie abrégée*, Paris, 1774, is in John Adams's library.

<sup>2</sup> Antoine Court de Gébelin (1728-1784), editor of *Affaires de l'Angleterre et de l'Amérique*, 1776-1779, in fifteen volumes, to which Franklin contributed. His *Monde Primitif*, in nine volumes, Paris, 1775-1782, is in the Adams library.

<sup>3</sup> Jacob Bryant (1715-1804), antiquary, of whose *New System, or an Analysis of Ancient Mythology*, London, 1775-1776, Adams had a copy.

<sup>4</sup> Richard Farmer (1735-1797), Master of Emmanuel College, Cambridge, or Hugh Farmer (1714-1787), a theological writer represented in the Adams library.

<sup>5</sup> Charles François Dupuis (1742-1809). His *Origine de tous les Cultes*, in seven volumes, Paris, 1795, is in the Adams library.

<sup>6</sup> John Adams had in his library two editions of the *History of the Decline and Fall* and the *Miscellaneous Works* of Gibbon.



about when they visit Rome. Eustace and Gibbon did not.

The Massachusetts Register<sup>1</sup> which you put into Mr. Monroe's hand in Manuscript, will be a clue to New England Modern Politicks.

American History; whether in Fable, Allegory, Painting, Sculpture, Architecture, Statuary, Poetry, Oratory, or Romance: which forgets to acknowledge James Otis to have been the Father of the American Revolution; will be nothing but a *Lie*.

My Susan<sup>2</sup> is embarked on the Ocean with a modest Sailor. God prosper their Voyage.

We thankfully accept your kind Congratulations on the Arrival at New York.<sup>3</sup> And remain as ever Your Friends.

Witness

JOHN ADAMS

MONTENZILLO, Jan. 12, 1818.

DEAR SIR, — In your Letter of the 21st of October you say that Mrs. Knox said to you that "her

<sup>1</sup> This appears to be other than the *Massachusetts Register* which had appeared annually.

<sup>2</sup> Susanna Boylston Adams (1796–1846), daughter of Charles and Sarah (Smith) Adams and granddaughter of John Adams. She married August 3, 1817, Lieutenant Charles Thomas Clark, who died in 1818.

<sup>3</sup> John Quincy Adams, who had landed in New York on August 18, on his return from the English mission to be Secretary of State in Monroe's cabinet.

husband was the parent of the American Navy.”<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to enquire what Idea that Lady could have had in her Mind.

Have you seen Mathew Carey’s History of the Rise and Progress of the American Navy? If you have read it you have seen that the American Navy was begotten and born and a System of Naval Jurisprudence instituted and established both in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and by the Continental Legislature, in 1775, and that not more than one-third of nine months was required for their breeding. You will there also see that Governor Gerry and Governor Sullivan had great and well founded Pretensions to the Character of Parents of the American Navy. There is a Statute, the Preamble drawn by Gerry and the Purvieu<sup>2</sup> by Sullivan, which is the earliest Monument on record to this powerful Arm of National defence.

Nevertheless Mrs. Knox’s Affection for her Husband or Veneration for his Memory could not have excited such a thought in her Mind without the recollection of some Fact on which She founded

<sup>1</sup> John Adams had questioned in 1813 a like statement on the navy by Mrs. Warren. *Warren-Adams Letters*, vol. II, p. 378.

<sup>2</sup> providing clause.— *Note by Waterhouse.*

such an Opinion; and I have particular Reasons for wishing to be informed what it was.

There is but one Period that I can conjecture. when in the Administration of President Washington, the Question was brought up the Carpet, of the Policy of building Ships to War with the Algerines. I Suspect that the Cabinet was divided and General Knox's Vote might decide the Question. Yours as ever.<sup>1</sup>

MONTENZILLO, QUINCY *Feb. 5. 1818.*

DEAR SIR, — Clark's History of the Navy is the same with Mathew Carey's. Wilkinson's History I have not seen. I believe with you that the Battle of Bunkers Hill has never been faithfully recorded.

It would require an hundred Volumes in Folio to investigate the "Roost Cock" who produced the Sacred mysterious Egg, to which you allude in your Letter of 17. Jan. The Antiquity of this Egg and its Universality over the whole Globe is astonishing. Chaldeans, Persians, Egyptians, Hindoos, Japanese, Greeks, Romans, Mexicans, Peruvians — all had this mysterious Egg.

<sup>1</sup> Letters from John Adams to Waterhouse, January 30 and February 6, 1818, are in *Writings of John Adams*, vol. x, pp. 279, 280.

Orpheus is said to have learned in Egypt, that Matter, unvecated(?) self existent and eternal, was called Chaos. That after many Ages this matter was arrounded into the Shape of an Egg: and out of this Egg were hatched Οὐρανός and Ghee[Γῆ] who became Husband and Wife and produced this grand and beautiful World: but who was the "Roostcock" that treaded the Egg out of Chaos? This question I cannot answer, without the help of Ocellus, Lucanus, Timacus of Locris, and Sanchuniathon who all derived their Cosmogony from the same Source. And if I understand them it was the Most High, the Eternal God the Good, who by his Logos, that is to say by his Ideas, his Intellect, his Intelligence gave to Matter first the form of an Egg and hatched all things out of it.

I believe you will agree with me that it is not worth our while to exchange the Cosmogony of Moses for any other that has appeared ancient or modern.

The Death of Judge Wendell <sup>1</sup> one of the best of Men and one of my oldest Friends affected very Seriously your Friend.

I have written to Mr. Monroe.

<sup>1</sup> Oliver Wendell (1733-1818).

Does not Milton allude to the Egg when he invokes

That Spirit, who from the first  
Was present, and with mighty Wings outspread  
Dovelike Sat brooding on the vast abyss,  
And made it pregnant?

You know the Rooster who produced Leda's Egg.  
But that produced only the Dioscures.

MONTENZILLO, *Oct. 11, '18.*

DEAR WATERHOUSE, — I am really grieved at your Misfortune, if it were only on the Principle of Rochefaucault and Swift, that

In all Misfortunes of our Friends  
We first consult our private Ends.

I lost a long expected and desired Visit. But when I reflect that your head might have been precipitated into the magnificent Entrance into the Domicil of a Woodchuck I am seized with horror. A late Experiment in natural Phylosophy on Billings's plain, has shown what might have been the fatal Consequence. You ought to be thankfull that no Bones were broken and no Flesh cut.

Madame and Monsieur are very thankfull that the Accident was nothing worse. We are both

agreed that our Friend has received no essential Injury. It is Waterhouse still.

My Advice, in my own particular, is, to keep the Reins in your own hands, till you are married and then resign them to your Spouse. *Experientia docet.*

QUINCY, July 19th, 1819.

DEAR WATERHOUSE, — I have heard Friend Lancaster,<sup>1</sup> with pleasure, he is an excellent scholastic and academical disciplinarian. I wish he had the melodious voice the graceful attitude's and dignified motions and gestures of the Rev'd George Whitefield, of wonderful memory.

Lancaster forms his company's into Battalions, Battalions into Regiments, his Regiments into Brigades, and teaches them all his Tactics with as masterly skill as Frederick or Napoleon could have done and all this without a whip, ferule, or Box on the ear, and all this by the simple action of that main Spring of human Nature, Emulation. How much more honourable to poor human Nature is this System than the old one of scolding, snarling, growling, Boxing, whipping. I believe his Itinerant

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Lancaster (1778-1838), founder of the Lancastrian system of education, who had come to America in 1818.



holdings forth, will do more good than Whitefield's did seventy years ago.

I am very sorry I did not see your Son. I congratulate you on your Marriage <sup>1</sup> though you have not condescended to inform me of it. Lord Loveatt,<sup>2</sup> when on trial for his life had heard the testimony of Sir Everad Faulkner, very decisive against him. The Court asked the Prisoner if he had any questions to put, or cross examination to make of the Witness. Loveatt answered, my Lord, I have nothing to say to Sir Everand Faulkner <sup>3</sup> but to wish him joy of his young Wife. Your wife young, or not young, I shall be glad to see her with you at the Hermitage of your old Friend,

JOHN ADAMS.<sup>4</sup>

MONTENZILLO, *June 16, 1820.*

DEAR SIR, — I thank you for Dr. Ware's letter to Dr. McLoud <sup>5</sup> which I have read with pleasure, they are worthy of his Father, and his Father in

<sup>1</sup> Premature. — *Note by Waterhouse.* [He married, September 10, 1819, Louisa Lee (1772-1863), daughter of Thomas and Judith (Colman) Lee.]

<sup>2</sup> Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat (1667?-1747).

<sup>3</sup> Sir Everard Fawkener (1684-1758).

<sup>4</sup> The letter is in the writing of a secretary.

<sup>5</sup> Henry Ware (1794-1843), *Two Letters to Alexander M'Leod.* New York, 1820.

Law. McCloud's choice of a Text is in the true Character of a Jesuitical Priest-hood whose maxim is, that it is lawful to lie for pious purposes.

You must at least have had a pleasant Evening, on your return from Montezillo, and I rejoice to hear that none of your days are unpleasant. Mine are like those of Cato Major, in the Dialogue between him, Scipio and Lelius; he was a little younger than I am.

I am very greatly obliged to Mrs. Waterhouse for her Visit to the little hill. She has touched my sensibility deeply by a delicate Allusion to a fatal event in my Family, too tender for me to dwell upon. I could have wished she had been acquainted in this House as long as you have.

The Judge has fulfilled his promise. What think you of the State of the World, is this Planet the Bedlam of the Solar System. By the multiplication of atrocious crimes one would think that the age of Cards was past, and the age of Circences was restored.

Present my Cordial thanks to Mrs. Waterhouse, for her kind Visit, and pray her to repeat it as soon as your avocations will permit. I am, as for forty years, your friend and humble Servant.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> By the hand of a secretary.

MONTEZILLO, *July 27th*, 1820.

DEAR SIR, — I will not envy you but congratulate you on the pleasure you have had in your excursion to Washington. But I covet the like pleasure so much that if I could do it without stirring up an uproar, and hurly burly through the Continent, old as I am I would get into my Gig, and bend my course thitherward to morrow morning. I regret most grievously that you did not visit Cedar Grove, at Fishkill Landing, after you were at West Point. John Peter and Caroline De Windt,<sup>1</sup> my Grand Children, and three of my great Grand Children would have boasted all their days of a visit from Dr. Waterhouse and his Lady. From your account of the Institution, I wish that some of my grand Sons were at it. I rejoice that Captain Phillips is so much better off than he was in the Navy. As a Pillar of a Church and as a host of Dr. Waterhouse he has my Blessing.

It is true that three persons in my family have been unwell. But their sickness was not such as to render your intended visit unacceptable or inconvenient. I hope you will not delay it long, we are all well now.

<sup>1</sup> Caroline Adams, daughter of Abigail (Adams) Smith, married John Peter De Windt.

Gen'l Lincoln's anecdote, sublime as it is, I had heard many years ago and often repeated. I wish with the Noble Soldier that the Kingdoms of the Earth would turn upon their heels to the right-about and wheel into the plains of Common sense and honesty and march forward Intrepidly to honour Glory and immortality.

I am extremely mortified at the doubt of my Son's visit to Montezillo this Summer. If he cannot come to me, it seems to me as if I must go to him. But if I should lay my Bones at Washington they will erect no monument to me. Are you a sufficient adept in Astrology to foretell when we shall have rain, for the information of your friend and humble Servant.<sup>1</sup>

FROM BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE

CAMBRIDGE, *April 29th*, 1821.

DEAR SIR, — Putting off writing is like postponing a visit — if you let it alone too long you know not how to begin it. As you retired from the convention <sup>2</sup> indisposed, I was not inclined to obtrude a letter on a sick man, who had rather enjoy his own

<sup>1</sup> The letter is by the hand of a secretary.

<sup>2</sup> The convention to revise the Constitution of Massachusetts, which sat November 1820-January 1821.

thoughts, than read the whimsical, wild, or stupid notions of another. It is more than probable I had another reason, nay I am sure I had, lest it should seem to impose the obligation of answering my letter; for I have, at times, thought that I should be a gainer, if I established a rate of exchange between your letters and mine, in the proportion of *old tenor* to *sterling*. I however enquire of Mr. Shaw,<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Everybody else near you, after your health and spirits, although I see, once in a while, good evidences of both.

There is possibly, nay probably, another reason that has held my hand from writing as formerly, and I am startled at it. I feel a growing disinclination, a something like a lassitude in the use of my pen, although my mind is full as busy as ever. I will confide to you moreover a *secret*, which I am unwilling to reveal to my nearest friends about me; namely I feel laziness creeping on me towards the close of every day, and sometimes during the whole day. I feel more fatigued after a two hours' ride than I used to feel. That is not all. I often have to hunt after my papers which I have put away and do not remember where; I go to Boston to do a dozen errands and

<sup>1</sup> William Smith Shaw (1778-1826).

forget two or three of them ; nay, farther, I forget people's names that I have heard but the day before ; and yet strange to relate, I can remember when Quebec was taken, and Wolfe and Montcalm slain. I can remember when George the 2d died, and what was then done, said and written on the occasion better than I can now recollect the sermon I heard this forenoon from Dr. Holmes. I have a vivid recollection of places and persons in my childhood while I sometimes do not, at first, recognize those to whom I have been introduced a month ago. I begin to suspect that some of these symptoms are merciful hints to remind me that I am not to remain here always. When I compare week with week, and month with month, I discover that my life runs rapidly, and almost insensibly on ; and this too creates a suspicion that I acquire few new ideas. The honors, so called, the titles, the praise, the ribbons, stars and feathers of life, as well as its scorns, are more and more matters of indifference. Nevertheless I am not tired, nor any way disgusted with life ; for I have, after all, experienced more pleasure than disgust, and I am still as desirous to preserve that greatest of blessings, *mens sana in corpore sano*, as if I were but thirty years old. If, however, I find my



material frame becoming more feeble, and my memory less tenacious. I cannot discover, though others may, that my intellect, as yet, sinks down with it. One thing I am pretty certain of, my temper is no way soured by encreasing age. I am not more disposed to anger, or to obstinacy. I am very sure that I am more disposed to laugh at the absurdity of the passing world, than to fret at it. I do not believe that old men are naturally and necessarily crabbed, cold and unaffectionate: on the contrary, I believe they are more affectionate towards young persons. They may hate to be put out of their habitual courses; but then they are equally averse to putting other people out of theirs. I have now a grandchild to play with and talk to, and enjoy the wonderful expression of its incipient thoughts beyond my powers of expression. *Letters*, if not language, *must* have been originally communicated from above. Man never could have invented those few characters of sounds, the alphabet, whereby he is able to express all the ideas of those who now *are*, and who *were*, and who are *to come*. And I think this is a stronger proof of a miracle, than my parson Channing has mustered up and printed in his late Dudleian Lecture.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *A Discourse on the Evidences of Revealed Religion*, March 14, 1821.

But to revert again to old age. Dr. Franklin, while playing chess with an old Scotch gentleman, Mr. Alexander,<sup>1</sup> in answer to some absurdity, about old men, which we did not think he heard (J. Thaxter, J. Q. Adams, Sam. Cooper, Johonnot, and myself),<sup>2</sup> "*Young men, whatever you may think, there are peculiar pleasures in old age, which I hope you will one day acknowledge.*"

On the breaking up of the forenoon service to day, I undertook to lead Judge James Winthrop home,<sup>3</sup> but he was not able to reach there without the help of a chaise. His use of warm-water internally and externally, as well as, rubbing his body with oil has debilitated him excessively. He has almost lost the use of his limbs, while the faculties of his mind are but little impaired. While the mind of some wears out before the body, Winthrop's body is worn out while his mind is in a degree vigorous, and his temper cheerful.

I once thought of committing to paper some memoirs of a political nature; but have put it off too long. The most that I shall do, may be

<sup>1</sup> William Alexander?

<sup>2</sup> These young men had accompanied John Adams on his second mission to France.

<sup>3</sup> James Winthrop (1752-1821), librarian of Harvard College. He died in September.

some rapid sketches of my own times, a kind of sketch with charcoal and chalk on blue-paper, such as painters make, previously to drawing them on canvass. President Dwight cautioned me against *procrastination*. I wish I had attended to, and followed the advice he gave me ten years ago. This "*thief of time*" has stolen away from me too [much] of that stuff which life is made of.

I have been reading over again to Mrs. Waterhouse your "*discourses on Davila*"; and that too with deliberation, so as to supply, as far as each, or both could recollect, those d[etails of] history which you merely refer to. We have studied [*cum*] *fructu*. The love of distinction, emulation, Congratulati[on, and] ambition, certainly constitute the winds and the tides a[nd keep] the world from stagnation, stinking, and corruption. They [are] only symptoms in the body, which require to be regulated, excited and soothed by the medico-philosophical-politician with the aid of such a shrewd nurse as was Catherine de Medicis, to "humbug," for a little while, mankind into a quiet government; for a fever, or a dropsy will come at last.

Mrs. Waterhouse desires her great respects to you; and wishes to be remembered to your family

connexions at *the little hill*. I beg them also to accept of the friendly salutations of your old friend

BENJ'N WATERHOUSE.

FROM JOHN ADAMS

LITTLE HILL, *May 8th*, 1821.

DEAR SIR, — You must have much pleasure in watching the opening mind of your Grandchild; for, being half Waterhouse and half Ware it must be a choice Spirit.

But how small is your felicity in comparison with mine, who have seven Grand-Children, scattered over the World, and seven more under my own roof, and eight or ten great grandchildren, one of whom is here with her Mother. A great-granddaughter, and a great-grandson of the same Age, three Years; whose Sports, capers, gambols, and droleries are diverting as any harlequins on any Stage.

So much for diversion, amusement and felicity! but there is a reverse of the medal; a solemn Side of the picture! I feel a great Trust; a solemn sacred responsibility! What is to be the fortune or destiny of this numerous Posterity? Have I done my duty to them? Aye! there's the rub; that gives me pain. I have spared neither pains

nor expence in proportion to my means, opportunities, and abilities, in the Education of my family: but I find that *Education alone is not all sufficient.*

Streight is the gate and narrow is the Way, that leads to reputation, honour, Success, and happiness even in this World. This narrow road leads through the Provinces of Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude, and must be steadily and cautiously travelled. Hercules will find Sloth, and Indolence, and Pleasure, and Vanity, and Pride, and Ambition, and Luxury, and Avarice, and Slander, and Ridicule, and Reproach, and Vilification, assau[l]ting him in every Stage of his Journey, and tempting him out of his Way.

How streight is this Gate! How narrow is this Way! Yet most infallibly it is the only Path to Happiness in this World. I say nothing, at present, of the next.

MONTENZILLO, *May* 18, 1821.

DEAR SIR, — I have made my Cantabridgians<sup>1</sup> read your Letter to all my family at Breakfast. We all recognized the concordance between the

<sup>1</sup> George Washington Adams (1801–1829), of the class of 1821; John Adams (1803–1834), of the class of 1823, and possibly Charles Francis Adams (1807–1886) of the class of 1825.

Oration upon Industry and Doctor Barrow's Sermons which I have caused to be read in my family over and over. Indeed I do not believe it possible for human Ingenuity to write any Thing upon Industry which may not be found substantially in his five Sermons in favour of that Virtue. George pronounced your letter to be as good a Letter as ever he read. Dr. Holmes might well say when you lost your Son "*Lord thou destroyest the hope of Man.*" Though we may all make the same pathetic Exclamation, yet he will not destroy the last hope of the Virtuous. Or if he should, we shall never know it.

I read Clarendon in 1758, when I was three and twenty years old, and have found his Works a valuable Source of Information ever since. I recommend it to all my young Friends; yet he is a very partial Writer as well as Hume. Both those Historians ought to have traced that Family of Steuarts to their origin, for they were of very bad descent and Education. Mary Queen of Scots was a Guise, a Niece of the Cardinal de Lorraine and the Duke of Guise, and had her Education under them and Catharine of Medicis, three as pernicious Characters as any in History. From that detestible Source she derived her licentious



manners, and her Principles of Religion, and Government; and she transmitted to all her Posterity a deep cast of all their Corruptions.

But my paralytic hand will hold no longer than to write the name of your Friend JOHN ADAMS.

MONTENZILLO, *May 21, 1821.*

DEAR SIR, — I am glad I forgot to return your Son's beautiful morsel on *Industry* with my last Letter; because it furnishes an Apology for writing another. In answering a letter I commonly forget to notice two thirds of it, till my answer is sent away.

Helvetius and Rousseau preached to the French Nation *Liberty*, till they made them the most mechanical Slaves; *equality* till they destroyed all Equity; *humanity* till they became Weasels, and African Panthers; and *Fraternity* till they cut one another's throats like Roman Gladiators.

Helvetius carried his enthusiasm for Equality so far that he fills many pages with learned and ingenious Arguments to prove thatt Men are born equal in Capacity, Intellect, and Genius. This doctrine, if I have correctly measured your inimitable wooden leg, is at Antipodes with yours. You

seem to imply that natural Genius is all, and Education nothing but artificial Show.

Now, if I rightly ken you both, I cannot perfectly agree with Waterhouse or Helvetius: For

1. Barrow and Waterhouse have both proved the antient Maxim that the Gods *sell all things to Industry*.

2. I have never known a studious Youth who did not come to something; a Student at the Bar who did not make a Lawyer; a Student in Medicine who did not become a Physician; a Student in Theology who did not turn out a divine. No, nor a studious Carpenter who did not appear an excellent Architect; nor a diligent Shoemaker, who was not a good Workman.

3. Genius is often produced by Accident. Mrs. Morton<sup>1</sup> says Genius is Sorrow's Child. Extream Poverty, deep distress, severe Affliction, sudden Danger, cruel, inextricable Embarrassments, often produce astonishing Efforts of Genius. Revolutions they say, produce self-taught Heroes, Statesmen, Phylosophers, Genius in Abundance, out of Multitudes of lumpish Animals. Anger, Hatred, Revenge, Jealousy,

<sup>1</sup> Probably Sarah Wentworth (Apthorp) Morton (1759-1846), wife of Perez Morton, and called the "American Sappho."

Envy, and above all *Love*, are often productive of sublime and beautiful Genius. Disappointment, too, often creates it.

4. Genius is often created by artificial and physical Means. West India and even New England Rum and Virginia Whisky, mild English Porter, and even good old Cyder, much more Burgundy Champaigne, Old Madeira, Cherry, and Old Hock, are great Inspirers. But, they say, for I never tried an Atom or a drop, that Opium and liquid Laudanum are the very divinities that stir within us, and will produce Genius out of the coarsest Clay. Arrack, and Coniac brandy have plenty of Genius in them.

5. To descend to examples. Tom. Paine could never write without several bottles of Porter, or an equal quantity of Alcohol, Rum, or Brandy, in his Stomach. Churchill could not compose a Verse, without a Bottle of Madeira Wine before him. Abraham B[isho]p<sup>1</sup> of Connecticutt could not write upon the Alliance of Church and State, till he had a reasonable quantity of Rum and Water in him. And I have been told by Parson Montague<sup>2</sup> of

<sup>1</sup> A republican of the day, possessed of a power of abuse and political attack.

<sup>2</sup> William Montague, who preached in the Episcopal church in Dedham from 1794 to 1815, when he resigned.

Dedham, though I will not vouch for the truth of it, that General Hamilton never wrote or spoke at the bar, or elsewhere, in public, without a bit of Opium in his mouth. But none of these causes can produce Helvetius's Equality of Genius. *Education*, after all, is a better leg, if it is wooden, than all the rest.

So much for octogenarian or nonagenarian badinage!

FROM BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE

CAMBRIDGE, *June 4th*, 1821.

DEAR SIR, — Your letter justifying and glorifying the character of Junius Brutus is the most masterly apology for that prodigy of patriotism and integrity I ever read. I have read it so often that I have it by heart. I wish all my crude political notions had met with such corrections.

My letters to you of late, have been the productions of an easy and, as you suggested, a happy mind; but this one is not of that class. Since I wrote you last, an event had come to my knowledge, which has filled me, and mine, with trouble and anxiety. In the late pulling to pieces of our little army, I am left out of the list of medical men, and of course deprived of *all my income*. Yes *all*.

It be sure was small; only twelve hundred dollars per ann. Still it was an anchor, sufficient to hold me steady and safe untill I should not need it. But now they have cut my cable, and I am left, when nearer seventy, than sixty years of age, to be stranded on the *Essex*, or any other in hospitable shore. It has been supposed that Mr. Monroe (for the matter rests solely with him) has been induced to believe that I am a man in easy circumstances; and that my salary was no object to me; whereas I have, at present, no other means of subsistence, and can strike into no new line of business. I *may be* some day in easy circumstances; but this depends on the life of a man belonging to a family famous for longevity; and as noted for holding fast and hard whatever they possess. *We* are, unfortunately, classed among the rich, and obliged to appear so, without deriving any benefit of the riches of our connexions. To be poor, and to be thought rich by our acquaintance, is a species of *splendid wretchedness*, that wants a name.

President Jefferson gave me a medical appointment worth 1500 dollars per ann. avowedly for my successful labours in vaccination. When Dr. Eustis, and some other Doctors of the *army* expressed their dissatisfaction at it, Mr. Jefferson

replied: "During our revolutionary war, we lost in Canada, and on our frontiers *Ten thousand men* by the *Small Pox*; and we should probably loose that number or more should we have another war, had not Dr. W[aterhouse] prevented such a calamity by expediting, by his incessant labours, the practice of vaccination full twenty years sooner than it, otherwise, would have been adopted. Beside, I consider not merely the army, but the whole people of the U. S. under obligations to him for saving an immense number of lives." And he added: "I therefore seized the first opportunity that occurred of testifying my sense of that obligation." President Madison caught the same idea from his predecessor; but the thing I fear escaped President Monroe.

Since that time you know better than any of them, how the unprincipled and jesuitical Junto impelled the college to join with certain professional men to destroy me and my family root and branch. They robbed me of the hard-earned fruit of the labours of more than thirty years and gave it to two of their favourites, because I would not join them in their bitter war against the national government. Both Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Madison exerted themselves to prevent my



destruction, but President Monroe has not, by being told that I can live comfortably without their aid, when, in fact, I cannot; for my creditors would eat me up in a twelve month.

When the army was reduced to the peace establishment, the Board of officers, acting according to certain military principles, left me out; but President Madison took his pen and put me in again. The late board of Officers, acting on the same principles, left me out; but when the list was presented to President Monroe he did *not put me in again*, as was expected. I expected the board would have acted as they did; for I never was in the actual service of the army. And it is said that the President has been made to believe that I am rich.

Now I believe, and so do others, that you could set this right with President Monroe by a few lines better than I, or any one, or every one could do by writing a volume. I am loath, *very* loath to tax your exertion. I feel for your eyes, and your yet extraordinary hand, which seems by your last letter, to have come to [*unfinished*].

Every one of our Presidents may not consider that the proper emblem of our government is not an Eagle, but *an Arrow*, which is a potent weapon

compounded of the *sword* and the *pen*. The *sword*-part is useless without the *feather*. If the sword has done much, the pen has done more. When the first is rewarded, the last should not be forgotten.

I have been confined, the week past, by indisposition, or should have rode over to Quincy, instead of writing. I remain as ever your steady friend,

BENJ'N WATERHOUSE.

It has been said, by some high officers that the office I held, (assistant surgeon of a reduced post) was too mean for me, and so indeed I felt it. Will the President give me one that I am more fit for, and I for it?

[*Endorsed*] Confidential.

BOSTON, *June 13th*, 1821.

DEAR SIR, — I cannot sufficiently thank you for the fresh instance of your friendship in writing to President Monroe in my behalf. If it may not effect the expressed object, it cannot but have a good operation. My worthy friend Dr. John Jebb adopted the favourite motto of the immortal Milton viz. "*No effort is lost.*"

General Miller,<sup>1</sup> Governor of Arkansas, called upon me last week, direct from Washington, and yesterday I returned the visit by spending the day with him at his own house in Lincoln. He told me that he expressed his surprise and regret that I was left out, while A. B. C. and D. were left in. They however, in a great measure, convinced him that they could not do otherwise, that the post to which I was attached was reduced to *five* men, and if they had ordered me to go to any distant post that I would not go. These considerations, connected with the idea of my being rich, reconciled my best friends to the exclusion. This I found was not all. They said, if I was (at my age) fit for the post, the station was not fit for me; that it had been a matter of surprise that Dr. W., who to the education of his own country, had added that of an European one, should be so long contented to occupy the narrow and dark niche of a post surgeon; or to express their ideas in my own language, that they wondered I should be contented to rest at anchor, "in ordinary," when I ought to have made sail. General B. remarked that "he (Dr. W.) had less enterprize than his brother Eustis,

<sup>1</sup> James Miller (1776-1851), who was brevetted brigadier-general for gallantry at Lundy's Lane.

though full as well qualified for a long voyage," etc., etc.

One of the Generals commanding this Eastern District, told me, four years ago, that I ought not to remain connected with the army, for while the War Department grant you every indulgence, we, from your age, and rank in life, cannot command you to do any thing of the ordinary duties of a surgeon. The fact is, they made my place so like a sinecure, that it, at times, created jealousies and discontents in the whole medical establishment. I have been aware of all this, and, weighing all circumstances, I am not surprized that they have not retained me as a surgeon of a low grade. Still I shall feel this sudden cutting of my cable.

Since I left the college, I have scarcely looked into a medical book, and since I lost my son, I have no relish for Natural history. I have therefore devoted the last seven years of my life to general, history, politics and ethics; and if the government should think me fit to be sent of any errand across the Atlantic, suitable to my years, studies, and habits, I can only say that I and my good wife would be ready and willing to go, and do as directed.

I do most seriously regret the time I have spent

in the service of this University in the line of physic, and Natural history; and I sometimes feel shamed that I have laid at anchor so long.

There is a Major Wooley<sup>1</sup> of the ordnance, a man of sense and science, and seriousness, for whom I have a great esteem, and who has an ambition to make his bow to you. I think I shall ride over one of these long afternoons, and thereby gratify him as well as myself.

Mr. Ware's sermons are not yet published; he being from home, but as soon as they appear I shall transmit you a copy. Yours with esteem, respect and gratitude,

BENJ'N WATERHOUSE.

CAMBRIDGE, *June 26th*, 1821.

DEAR SIR, — Hearing that your rheumatism was no better, I hasten to say, that instead of the *Volatile Tincture of Guaicum*, I would advise you to apply the flesh-brush, or that coarse cloth which the Russians call *Krash* to the limb that is affected and to the region of the hip and loins, beginning at the leg and so rubbing upwards. This should be done by some prudent man, who will be carefull not to rub off the skin. In want of *Krash* any

<sup>1</sup> Abram R. Woollay of New Jersey.

stiff, short-haired brush will answer. The guai-cum is an inflammatory medicine and may not be good for your eyes, whereas the stimulating, or inflammatory brush affects only the part that needs its stimulus. Your pain is from a diminished tone in the fibres of the investing membranes, hence they require excitement by friction, or by blistering with mustard, or cantharides. I use to consider this dry friction almost an infallible remedy in myself when afflicted with rheumatism. It should be used night and morning. I hate to take medicine inwardly and so do you, and when I can have recourse to external stimuli, I never take them inwardly even in the form of a cordial. The philosophy of currying an horse is to *prevent* rheumatism, and to *remove* any such affection should it exist. My father-in-law has this operation performed for him every day, and so has Dr. Danforth,<sup>1</sup> who is older than you.

I have never been forward in carrying you company, from a fear that it might not be, at all times agreeable, but I could not resist the wishes of such a man as Major Wooley. He was bred a lawyer, and is very well read — a good chemist, and a

<sup>1</sup> Probably Dr. Samuel Danforth (1740-1827), but he was quite five years younger than John Adams.



favourite of the President, and indeed of all who know him intimately. He has never that I ever knew had an opportunity of distinguishing himself in battle, but it is his science, and his fidelity in the expenditure of very large sums that has made him valuable. He is moreover with his wife remarkably serious, of the New Jersey calvinistic cast. I am sorry to add that in the new arrangement he must go to Arkansaw, and leave his wife and children at Newark. Did he not stand at the head of the list of Majors he would resign.<sup>1</sup> Fearfull that the mail will be closed, I have written with more hurry than I could wish. My wife desires her great and particular respects to you, and to your valuable nurse, her name sake, who we both hope approves of our prescription. My Louisa has had long practice in the care of an Uncle, and of a father far advanced in life. Yours with encreased attachment,

B. WATERHOUSE.

FROM JOHN ADAMS

MONTENZILLO, 25th November, 1821.

DEAR SIR, — I sympathise with Alexipharmacus in his resentment of the indignities offered to

<sup>1</sup> He was dismissed from the service May 1, 1829.

Richardson, Locke, Barrow, etc., yet I cannot approve of the principle of Clarissa Harlow's history, because such Virtue ought never to be rendered so unfortunate; for I believe it never is, even in this world; nor was ever so infernal a villain as Love-lace ever able to maintain, for so long a time, the esteem and the admiration of man-kind. Nor do I approve of the resolution of Sir Charles Grandison to confine himself to private life; for such talents and such virtues are under moral and religious obligations to engage in the service of their Country and mankind, and to undertake the most hazardous services when circumstances may require them.

The obligations of mankind to Mr. Locke for his diffusion of the principles of Civil and Religious Liberty, are beyond all my powers of calculation; nor is his merit the less, though the wit of Voltaire and the eloquence of Rousseau, who derived their principles from him, *Reprobates* as they were, contributed more to scatter them throughout the world, among all ranks of people, than his plain discourses could have done. His Essay upon the human understanding is an admirable work. He had studied Descartes and Hobbes, and his theory was suggested by them. He corrected most of

their errors, but he adopted some even from Hobbes. Some of his mistakes have been noted by Hume, Berkley, and Reid, but the inaccuracies of them all, I think, have been clearly pointed out by Dugald Stuart, who has proved that Metaphysics are too profound for the human understanding to investigate.

Are you a partizan for the Greeks against the Turks? G[reat] B[ritain] is determined that neither Russia or Austria shall have them; if it be true that the King is sending 15,000 troops from Hanover to the Ionian Islands. But this is as far beyond my comprehension as Metaphysics. This I know that I am your old Friend.

P. S. I do not relish the controversy between England and Scotland. They have both done wonders in a literary way, even in the present Century. Pray, is Hallam,<sup>1</sup> the Middle-age-man, Scotch or English? <sup>2</sup>

MONTENZILLO, *June 10th*, 1822.

DEAR SIR, — Thanks for your letter of 5th June and smoaking lecture, but as I have not read the

<sup>1</sup> Henry Hallam (1777–1859) was born at Windsor. His *View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages* appeared in 1818.

<sup>2</sup> By the hand of a secretary.

lecture I shall confine myself in this, to smocking Theology. I believe you have heard of the Park Street prayers for the conversion of Boston and Cambridge, in which as far as they are good, sincere, honest pure and benevolent, I heartily join them; but which as far as they are hypocritical bigoted and fanatical, I hope will meet the fates of some other prayers. About the time of the British fast for success in the war against America, Dr. Franklin and I then keeping hous[e] together at Passy made a dinner for the Americans and some other company. The conversation turning at table on the subject of the British supplications, Dr. Franklin said, Gentlemen I have an history to relate to you relative to this, which I had from the best authority. On the British fast day St. Gabriel and St. Michael looked down upon earth. Says Gabriel, there is a thick fog around that planet. We can see nothing what is it? Oh, says Michael, that is a cloud consisting of the prayers of the English coming up for the success of their armies against America. Poh! says Gabriel. Michael smiled, and said that Poh! has scattered all the mist, we can now see plainly land and water, hills and valleys, cities and Villages. This Fable I believe to be Franklin's own composition because

it is exactly characteristic of his genius. I hope and believe that the mephytic particles of the Park Street prayers will be as effectually dispersed to the four winds.

I agree perfectly with you in your opinions of the Orthodox proceedings of election week and I think you deserve commendation for your prudent and friendly visit and advice to Dr. Holmes. Gentlemen of graver characters will consider this subject more seriously. I can view it only with a proper mixture of pity and derision.

my kind regards to Mrs. Waterhouse. from your friend.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> By the hand of a secretary.





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